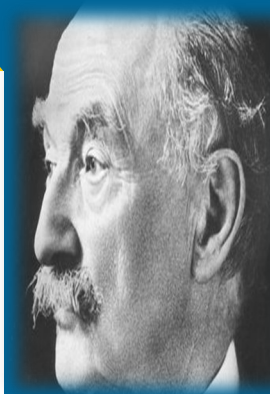


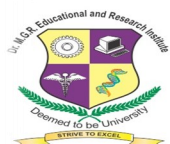
On the Eve of his 183rd Birth Anniversary

# Thomas Hardy

*The Wessexian*



Department of English



**Dr. M.G.R.**  
**EDUCATIONAL AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE**  
**DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY**

University with Graded Autonomy Status

(An ISO 21001 : 2018 Certified Institution)

Periyar E.V.R. High Road, Maduravoyal, Chennai-95. Tamilnadu, India.



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*The Wessexian*

Compiled by:  
**Prof Dr A Anitha**  
Head - Department of English  
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Joint Registrar - Languages



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# Thomas Hardy

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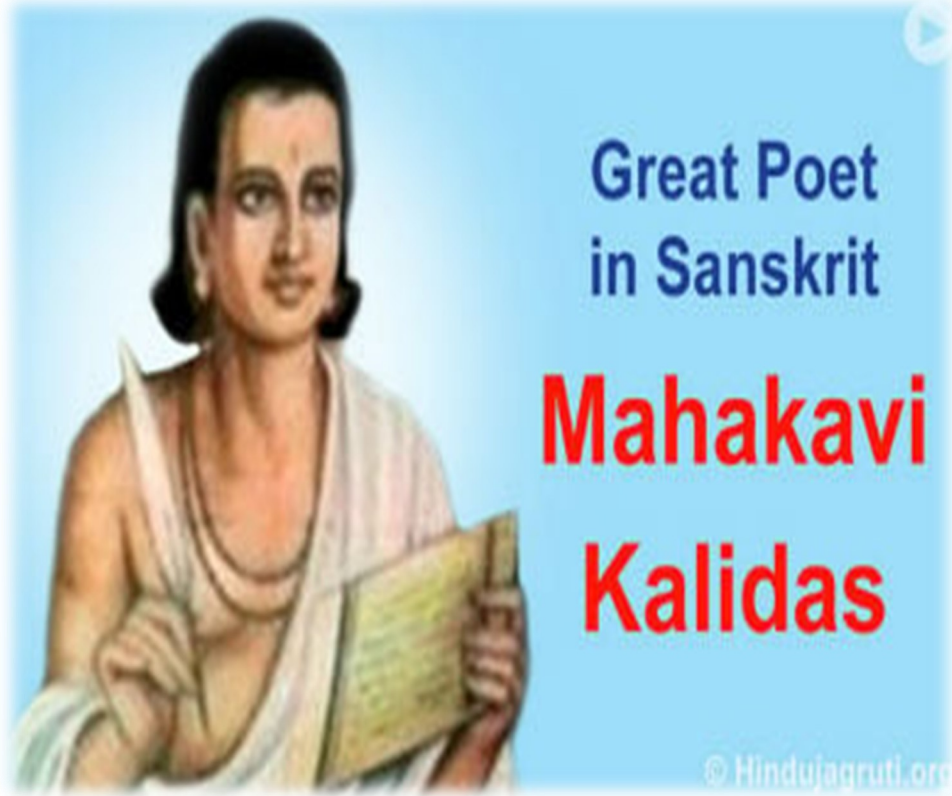
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# Foreword

When Hardy died in 1928, his ashes were deposited in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey and his heart, having been removed before cremation, was interred in the graveyard at Stinsford Church where his parents, grandparents, and his first wife were buried.

Hardy, by his own admission, had an inclination to write of the tragic side of life. Thomas Hardy wished to be remembered as a poet, is known as a novelist, and is virtually neglected as a short story writer. Of all the critical works devoted to him there is none which concentrates on his short stories. Hardy's long career spanned the Victorian and the modern eras.

An architect by profession, he gives to his novels a design that is architectural, employing each circumstance in the narrative to one cumulative effect. The most important contribution of Hardy to English novel is that he gives to the novel a philosophy of life, a philosophy which is made of pessimism, fatalism and realism.

Considered a Victorian realist, Hardy examines the social constraints on the lives of those living in Victorian England, and criticises those beliefs, especially those relating to marriage, education and religion, that limited people's lives and caused unhappiness. Indeed, Hardy's main characters often seem to be held in fate's overwhelming grip.

Virginia Woolf, a visitor to Max Gate [Hardy's home], noted some of Hardy's enduring power as a writer: "Thus it is no mere transcript of life at a certain time and place that Hardy has given us. It is a vision of the world and of man's lot as they revealed themselves to a powerful imagination, a profound and poetic genius, a gentle and humane soul."

Thomas Hardy is best known for his novels, all of which were published in the mid- to late-19th century. His last novels, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, are generally considered his finest. These works challenge societal mores with their sympathetic portrayals of the hardships of working-class people. After receiving very serious criticism about these two novels, Hardy stopped writing novels and started concentrating in poetry.

This book - *Thomas Hardy*, published by the Department of English of our university - on the Eve of his 183rd Birth Anniversary (2 June 2023) makes a simple and serious attempt to introduce the great novelist to the younger generations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Five of his top novels - *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *Jude the Obscure* and *The Return of the Native* - have been thoroughly studied by selecting the very important themes and other aspects of each novel, viz., brief book summary, novel's reviews, historic content, literary context, major characters and their analysis, discussion of principal themes of the novel, glossary, novel's adaptations (theatre, opera, film, television, cinema, etc.,

Another special feature of the book is that there is a web link through which one may visit and watch the film, cast in the film and the awards and nominations received by the film. Also, some selected scenes from the film are given. Further, there are some webliographies duly annotated through which readers may get additional information and other details about the novel.

The book also contains some chapters on: his quotes, his poems, his short stories, his writing style, literary themes in his works, life of Thomas Hardy and The Thomas Hardy Society.

I do hope that the book would be found very useful and highly informative to all the stakeholders in English literature. The sincere attempt of the department of English is appreciated.

Dr M Ganesan  
Joint Registrar - CDC & OBE  
Dr MGR Educational and Research Institute  
Maduravoyal, Chennai - 600 095

# PREFACE

Thomas was twice nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature and was made a member of the Order of Merit in 1910. Thomas Hardy's contribution to the English literature, especially novel is unique. He presents in his novel a new aspect of contemporary life. He stood in revolt against the conventional life of the age. He denounces the whole of modern civilization which has created so many problems in the lives of the dwellers of the towns. Civilization produces moral prigs, theorists, artificial and complex types of humanity. In deliberate reaction against this, he took up for his themes the lives of the lowly, humble rustics, who live far from the madding crowd. He is, indeed, the first of the English novelists to choose English peasant types for the heroes and heroines in the series of his masterpieces. The scenes of his novels are laid in a primitive corner of England, where civilization has not yet made its appearance. For this region he has revived the ancient name of 'Wessex' and he has recreated it partly as a land of the imagination.

Thomas Hardy spent the greater part of his life in this region and studied it with the scientific precision of an antiquarian and the imaginative enthusiasm of a poet. In his novels he has given to 'airy nothings' a local habitation and a name. Dorset was the centre of this region and it was extremely conservative and backward, scarcely touched by the industrial revolution which had



villages, where traditional customs, manners and beliefs still prevailed.

Thomas Hardy's indifferent style has left deep imprints on the English as well as international literature. His distinctive writing approach and unique way of expression made him stand out among the best Victorian Poets. His thoughtful ideas influenced many great poets and writers including, D. H. Lawrence, John Cowper Powys, and Edward Driffield. He successfully documented his ideas and feelings in his writings that even today writers try to imitate his unique style, considering him a beacon for writing prose and poetry.

The idea of bringing this book – "THOMAS HARDY – The Wessexian" is an attempt to introduce him to the younger generations of 21<sup>st</sup> century. After a long thought-process, it has been decided to offer only highly selected aspects of his life and literary contribution. For all other detailed paraphernalia, the necessary and important web links have been given to enable the readers to visit and know more about him. In addition to this, a separate chapter containing highly informative webliographies with annotations is included in the book. The first chapter offers the interesting information about 'Wessex' with the pictures and other geographical features.

His top five novels have been highly analysed in detail with necessary web links to visit and watch the movies on these novels. Also, his contribution to short stories, poetry, his literary themes and his typical writing style have been included in the book. In order to provide a wide picture about his life, the detailed information about his biography from seven different web sites has been provided with their respective web links.

His famous quotations and the important pictures about his village, home, funeral, study room, etc would interest the readers and enable them to know about the novelist Thomas Hardy.

The detailed information about 'The Thomas Hardy Society' and 'The Thomas Hardy Journal' are provided in the book which would encourage the stakeholders of English literature to know more about the Journal (published twice a year) that receives articles/essays.

We do hope that these information and other details about Thomas Hardy's life and his contribution to English literature would be found more useful to the students, teachers and scholars of English literature. Any suggestions, for improvement are welcome.

25 April 2023

Prof Dr A Anitha  
Head - Department of English  
Prof Dr S Ramalingam  
Joint Registrar - Languages  
[Authors]

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<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Thomas-Hardy>

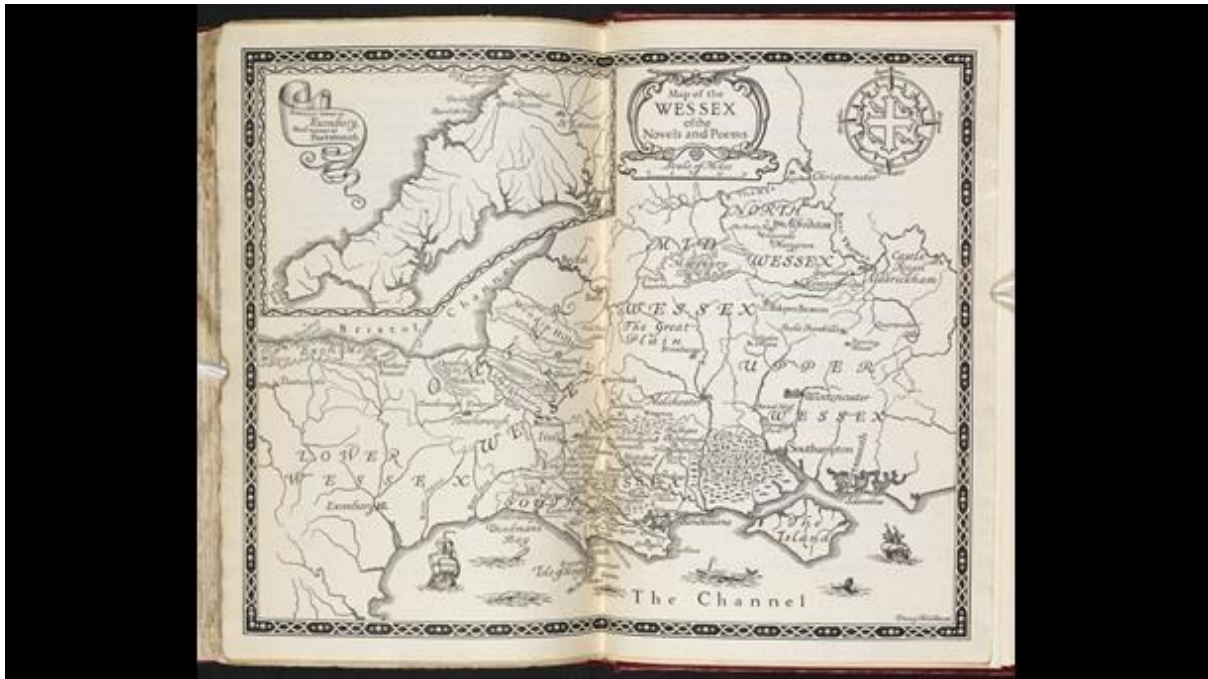
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# Hardy's Wessex

Thomas Hardy is famous for his novels of 19th-century rural life. Rich in description and dialect, they are written museums of a vanished culture. Hardy set them in Wessex, an imaginary region mapped onto the geography of south and south-west England.



## Where does the word 'Wessex' come from?

Thomas Hardy uses the name 'Wessex' for the first time in chapter 50 of *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874); it was the name for the Anglo-Saxon kingdom spreading over much of the south of England, but the term fell out of use until the 19th century, when there was a revival of interest in pre-Norman Conquest England. The first documented use of the term in the 19th century is in 1868 by William Barnes, the poet who used Dorset dialect in his work, and who promoted the use of 'indigenous' words instead of Romance-language-based words – 'inwit' instead of 'conscience', for example. Barnes kept a school in Dorchester, close to where Hardy worked as a young architect from 1856-62, and Hardy was helped by Barnes in his study of Latin and Greek.

## How does Hardy use the term 'Wessex'?

Wessex functions as an imagined place based on a real region with actual places which Hardy knew well and observed closely. He creates his own place-names which correspond to actual place-names. Wessex in the novels reaches from the south coast north to Oxford (Christminster), and east from Windsor (Castle Royal) to Taunton (Toneborough) in the west; some natural or

antique place-names are retained – Sedgemoor, Stonehenge – while others are altered – Salisbury Plain becomes 'The Great Plain', the Isle of Wight becomes 'The Island'. And some town and city names, such as Southampton and Portsmouth, are retained. In later revisions of the novels consistencies were checked and distances and directions specified. As the popularity of the novels grew, 'Hardy's Wessex' became a place of literary pilgrimage.

## The invention of Wessex

Thomas Hardy was born in 1840 near Dorchester. The son of a stonemason, he was schooled locally. He played the fiddle well enough to perform at church services and local celebrations and taught at the Sunday school.

Hardy moved to London after becoming an architect but was inspired by the customs and traditions of the people and places he knew best.

## Inventing Wessex

1873 saw the publication of *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Hardy's first major success and his first novel set in Wessex.

His stories now had a recognisable territory. He both borrowed and invented names for the towns, villages and countryside in which they were set.

Hardy undertook extensive research and kept a number of notebooks. Among them was the Facts Notebook, started after his return to Dorset in 1883. In this he recorded snippets from the local newspaper which he turned into plots.

## A dream-country

Readers were fascinated by Wessex and guides to its literary landmarks soon appeared.

This led to Hardy worrying that Wessex was interpreted too literally, and in the preface to the 1895 edition of *Far From the Madding Crowd*, he called it 'a merely realistic dream-country'. He was a storyteller, not a reporter or historian.

## Realism and the real

Hardy's Wessex novels are examples of naturalism, a branch of realism influenced by scientific observation.

Wessex is like a petri dish in which Hardy explores what it is to be human. However, even realist writers exaggerate and invent in order to keep their readers reading. Novels can only ever give us an impression of reality.



The garden at Hardy's Cottage



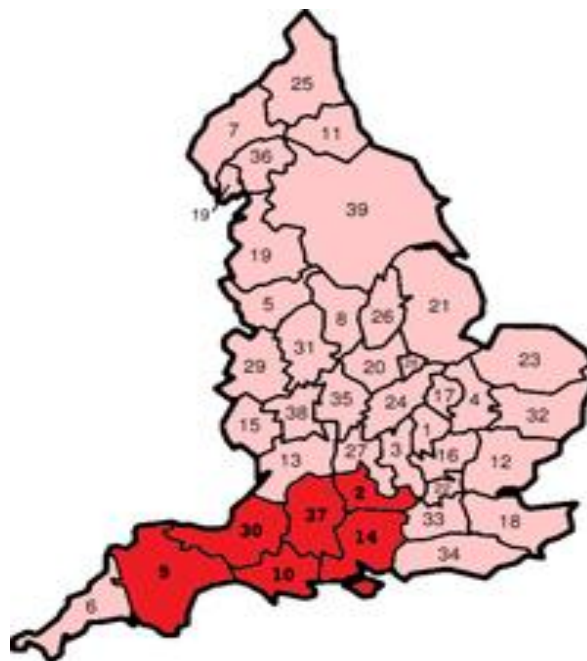
Locations in Wessex, from *The Wessex of Thomas Hardy* by Bertram Windle, 1902, based on correspondence with Hardy.

### Wessex regions and actual English counties

Map of the historic counties of England on which the approximate regions of Wessex can be found. Hardy did not always use the historic boundaries in his writings.



Region of Wessex	Actual English County	Position on Map
Lower Wessex	Devon	9
Mid Wessex	Wiltshire	37
North Wessex	Berkshire	2
Outer Wessex	Somerset	30
South Wessex	Dorset	10
Upper Wessex	Hampshire	14



Map of the historic counties of England on which the approximate regions of Wessex can be found. Hardy did not always use the historic boundaries in his writings.





# Timeline

## Thomas Hardy

[1840-1928]

### Time line

- ❖ 1840: Thomas Hardy was born on June 2nd, in Higher Bockhampton.
- ❖ 1848 -1856: Hardy was attending school.
- ❖ 1856: Hardy was involved in architect school met and studied with Horace Moule.
- ❖ 1862: Hardy travelled to London and worked with Arthur Blomfield. It was in London that he attended an Exhibiton and started writing poetry.
- ❖ 1865: Hardy published his first article, "How I Built Myself a House."
- ❖ 1867: Hardy returned to Dorset and wrote *The Poor Man and the Lady* a novel that was never published.
- ❖ 1870: Was the year Hardy met Emma Lavinia Gifford.
- ❖ 1871-1873: *Desperate Remedies*, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* published respectively.

- ❖ 1873: Hardy left architecture to become full-time writer.
- ❖ 1874-76: The year Hardy married Emma and *The Hand of Ethelberta* was published.
- ❖ 1878: *The Return of the Native* published and was among successful novels that made Hardy celebrity
- ❖ 1880-83: *The Trumpet-Major*, *A Laodicean* and *Two on a Tower* published respectively a year apart.
- ❖ 1886: Hardy moved into Max Gate. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* published.
- ❖ 1887-88: *The Woodlanders* and *Wessex Tales* short stories published
- ❖ 1891: *Noble Dames* and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* published
- ❖ 1892: Hardy's father passed away. He begun serialization *The Pursuit of the Well-Beloved*.
- ❖ 1893: Meets Florence Henniker.
- ❖ 1894-97: *Life's Little Ironies* was published and *The Well-Beloved* appeared in volume form.
- ❖ 1898: Hardy's first volume of poems, *Wessex Poems*, appears in an edition of only 500 copies. He stopped writing novels.

- ❖ 1902: *Poems of the Past and Present*, Hardy's second volume as a poet, is published.
- ❖ 1903: Hardy worked on *The Dynasts* (epic trilogy).
- ❖ 1910: Hardy receives the Order of Merit and the Freedom of Dorchester.
- ❖ 1912: Emma, Hardy's wife dies.
- ❖ 1913: *A Changed Man* was published. Hardy makes a pilgrimage to the sites of his first wife Emma.
- ❖ 1914: *Satires of Circumstance* are published. It contains the "Poems of 1912-13," written in memory of Emma.
- ❖ 1914: Hardy marries Florence Dugdale. World War I broke up, contributing to Hardy's pessimism.
- ❖ 1917-23: *Moments of Vision, Late Lyrics and Earlier*, and *The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall* published.
- ❖ 1925: Hardy is said to have been working on his autobiography, published posthumously under Florence's name.
- ❖ 1928: Hardy dies. His ashes are buried in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, and his heart is buried in Emma's grave. *Winter Words* and Hardy's autobiography is published posthumously.



# The Thomas Hardy Society

<https://www.hardysociety.org/>

*The Thomas Hardy Society was founded in 1968 to promote understanding and appreciation of the life and works of the novelist and poet Thomas Hardy (1840-1928).*

One of the largest literary societies in the world, the Thomas Hardy Society is a community of general readers and enthusiasts as well as students and academics.

Based in Dorchester, the Society organises a lively programme of public engagement and academic events including lectures, Study Days, guided walks through Hardy's Wessex and in London and elsewhere, concerts, poetry readings, and more.

With an international membership, three journals a year, a biennial festival and conference, and strong links to other organisations promoting Hardyan themes, the Thomas Hardy Society acts as a hub for the education and enjoyment of anyone with an interest in Thomas Hardy.

## The Thomas Hardy Society Journals

The Thomas Hardy Society currently publishes three journals each year. Members of the Society receive print copies and/or [electronic access](#), depending on their [membership status](#). Journal contents are also published in digital format on ProQuest Literature Online.

While all academic contributions are peer-reviewed, the journals also take pride in serving as a platform for exchange and dialogue between 'general readers', academics from a range of disciplines (from the earliest stages of their careers to the most established), researchers, students, the heritage industry, creative

writers, educators, etc. – anyone, in short, with a stake in the continuing literary and cultural legacy of Thomas Hardy. As such, both journals typically welcome a broad, diverse range of materials and approaches.

The Hardy Society Journal appears twice annually, in spring and summer. Contributions might include – but are not limited to – reports on Society activities and other Hardy-related events, Society news, creative writing, reproducible illustrations, reflective pieces, book reviews, short research snapshots, and formal research articles. Research articles for the Hardy Society Journal will not typically exceed 5,000 words, though longer articles may be considered for inclusion.

The Thomas Hardy Journal is published each autumn. Over the past three decades, it has become an important force in international Hardy scholarship. While it continues to update members on Society events, the emphasis falls on the scholarly study of Hardy's life, work, and contexts. Articles for the Thomas Hardy Journal do not typically exceed 8,000 words, but longer contributions will be considered occasionally.

Articles for both journals are sent for peer-review. Books reviews may be offered by contributors, but are usually invited by the editor. Contributions should be sent by email, in Word or Rich Text format, to the editor, Dr Emily Vause ([editor@hardysociety.org](mailto:editor@hardysociety.org)). Email queries about the suitability of contributions are welcome.

If electronic submission is not possible, contributions may be sent by post to the Editor

The Thomas Hardy Society,  
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Dorchester,  
Dorset  
DT2 8PY

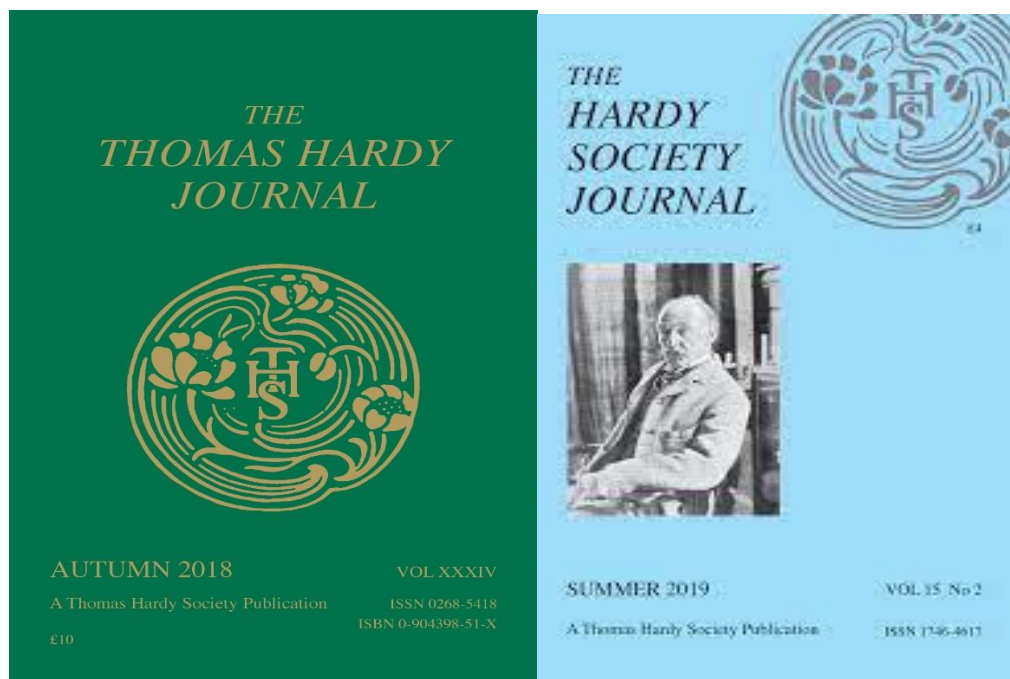
All essays should be double-spaced. Please leave a margin of 2.54 cm/1 inch and use Times New Roman, font size 12. References should be given as endnotes. Authors of academic contributions should adhere to the [journal style guide](#).

## Download a sample Journal

A sample journal (Autumn 2018) is available to download here

[Autumn 2018 journal](#)

<https://www.hardysociety.org/media/files/8707-THJ-Autumn2018.pdf>



## Resources

Here available are: Links to a vast array of primary and secondary material, including Hardys texts, information about his life and the actual locations associated with it, and other web-based Hardy resources.

- [Life of Thomas Hardy](#)
- [Hardy's Wessex Locations](#)
- [Links to the Complete Texts of all Hardys Novels](#)
- [The Complete Texts of all Hardys Short Stories](#)
- [The Complete Texts of Hardys 947 published poems](#)

# Life

## of

### *Thomas Hardy*

#### [1] A Biographical Sketch:

**[Resource:** <https://www.victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/bio.html> **]**

Thomas Hardy's life can be divided into three phases. The first phase (1840-1870) embraces childhood, adolescence, apprenticeship, first marriage, early poems and his first unpublished novel. The second phase (1871-1897) is marked by intensive writing, which resulted in the publication of 14 novels and a number of short stories. In the third phase (1898-1928), the period of the writer's rising fame, he abandoned writing novels and returned to poetry.

#### Childhood and youth

Thomas Hardy was born on 2 June 1840 in a brick and thatch two-storey cottage in the hamlet called Higher Bockhampton, in the parish of Stinsford, about three miles east of Dorchester, the county town of Dorset. With the exception of five years, Hardy lived all his long life in his home county. Both of Hardy's parents were of Dorset origin. His father, also named Thomas, was a self-employed master mason and building contractor. The Hardys were an old Dorset family, which had descended from the Le Hardy family residing in the Isle of Jersey since the 15th century. One of the ancestors, Le Clement Hardy, was lieutenant-governor of Jersey in 1488. Another kinsman, Sir Thomas Hardy (1769-1839) was Admiral Horatio Nelson's aide and best friend. At the turn of the eighteenth century the family experienced a rapid economic decline.

Hardy's mother, Jemima, was a former maidservant and cook. She came from a poor family, but she had acquired from her mother a love of reading, and her literary tastes included Latin poets and French romances in English translation. She provided for her son's education. First, she taught little Thomas to read and write before he was four, and then she instilled in him a growing interest in literature. Hardy had a great affection for his mother throughout all her life. His father, who was a keen violin player, passed on to young Thomas a love of music. Both Thomas's father and paternal grandfather were important members of the Stinsford Parish Church choir. As Paul Turner writes: "Apart from parental influences, Hardy's childhood was dominated by two things: the local church, and the natural world around him.". (6)

Hardy received his early schooling at the local National School in Lower Bockhampton, which opened in 1848. The school was run by the "National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church". In 1850, when he was ten, Jemima Hardy enrolled her son at a non-conformist school run by the British and Foreign School Society in Dorchester, where he learnt Latin and French among other subjects. Young Thomas had begun his formal education at the age of eight and ended at the age of 16. However, as a boy, he read both Greek and Roman classics in translation and the Bible, which he knew exceptionally well. He was also very fond of reading romances. His favourite authors were William Harrison Ainsworth, Walter Scott, and Alexander Dumas. In addition, he read Shakespeare's tragedies. Although he was quite fond of school, he preferred solitude and reading books. In Dorset young Thomas witnessed the decline of the old pastoral society and the rise of industrialism.

## Apprenticeship

Unable to pursue a scholarly or clerical career, Hardy became apprenticed in 1856 to a local architect, John Hicks, who specialised in church restoration. His occupation required extensive trips to various locations in Dorset. At Hick's office Hardy met another boy, Henry Bastow, who had a similar interest in classical literature, especially poetry, and in religious matters. Hardy could only read early in the morning, between five and eight, before he left for the office. In Dorchester he met a local schoolmaster and an poet William Barnes (1801-1866), who published poetry about rural life in local dialect. He may have been the inspiration for Hardy to start writing poetry on a similar theme.

Hardy's architectural apprenticeship, which lasted a little more than four years, provided him with important experiences which would later inform his fiction and poetry. While still in Dorchester, Hardy met Horace Moule, a vicar's son, and a student of Queen's College, Cambridge. Eight years older than Hardy, Horace was at the start of a career as scholar. He became Hardy's best friend and mentor who encouraged him to read Greek tragedies and contemporary English literature. At that time the most recent developments in English literature included the publication of Alfred Tennyson's poems *Idylls of the King*, George Meredith's two important novels *Richard Feverel* and *Evan Harrington*, Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* and George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*. Apart from those, in 1859, Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, a book which exerted a profound influence on Hardy.

## London

In April 1862, Hardy decided to suspend his architectural apprenticeship and left for London. He rented lodgings at 3, Clarence Place, at Kilburn, near Edgware Road. Some biographers speculate that his decision was caused by yet another unsuccessful love affair. Thomas had already been infatuated with two Dorset girls: Elizabeth Sarah Bishop (Lizbie Browne), who "scorned him as too young," and Louisa Harding, to whom he spoke only two words, a shy "Good evening" in the lane. (Halliday, 25,26) Now he had proposed and been rejected by a Dorchester girl, Mary Waight, who was



older than he. Hence, possibly the move to London was caused not only by his desire to learn more but also to make a fresh start in life.

In London Hardy spent five years working as an assistant architect for Arthur Blomfield (1829-1899), who restored and designed churches, usually in a Gothic Revival style. Blomfield was very glad of his new associate and proposed him for a member of the Architectural Association. Hardy also explored the scientific and cultural life of London. In spring 1863, he heard Charles Dickens's public lecture. He visited museums, galleries and attended plays and operas. Hardy particularly enjoyed Shakespeare and ancient tragedy at the Drury Lane Theatre. He read the works of Herbert Spencer, Thomas Henry Huxley, John Stuart Mill, John Ruskin and Charles Darwin. Under the influence of these works, Hardy began to reconsider his traditional Christian upbringing and decided to abandon his youthful plan of ordination into the Anglican Church. He became increasingly disillusioned with institutional Christianity. While in London Hardy also became acquainted with the poetry of contemporary Victorian poets, Robert Browning and Algernon Charles Swinburne, and he began to write his own poetry, but it was rejected for publication. In 1865, Hardy wrote a satirical sketch "How I Built Myself a House", which was published in *Chambers Journal* and won him a prize. In that year Hardy bought a number of books on literature and began to study it more intensely. He also continued to write poetry which foreshadowed the themes of his later prose fiction: human misery, uncaring universe, loneliness, chance.

## Back in Bockhampton

In July 1867, unable to have his poems published and weary of London, Hardy left the capital to return to Bockhampton and resumed working for Hicks. Shortly after his return, Hardy probably entered into a passionate affair with Tryphena Sparks (1851-1890), an attractive sixteen-year-old cousin. Tryphena was the youngest child of James and Maria Sparks, Hardy's uncle and aunt, who lived in a thatched cottage in the nearby village of Puddletown. Some biographers believe that in the years 1868 to 1870, when she was a trainee teacher in the Puddletown school, she had a romance with Hardy, although there is too little evidence of their relationship. Nevertheless, Tryphena must have exerted some profound effect on Hardy's life since she appears in disguise in many of his novels and poems. After her death Hardy wrote a poem pervaded with personal memories, entitled "Thoughts of Phena".

## First novels

Under the inspiration of George Meredith's prose, Hardy began to write his first novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, which he submitted to the publishing house of Alexander Macmillan. Although Macmillan did not publish it, he encouraged Hardy to keep writing. Meredith advised him to write novels with more plot. In 1869, John Hicks died and Hardy moved to Weymouth to seek employment as an architectural assistant. At the same time he began to write another novel, *Desperate Remedies*, which was also rejected by Macmillan but published anonymously in three volumes by the publisher William Tinsley in 1871. After the publication of *Desperate Remedies*, Hardy decided to devote himself fully to writing, although he could not yet achieve a literary

or financial success. In 1872, he published his second novel, *Under the Greenwood Tree*. Encouraged by favourable reception Hardy published *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), the most autobiographical of all his novels, which introduced some of the themes he would develop in his later works. The fourth novel, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) gained public notice and eventually brought him financial success. In 1878, *The Return of the Native* brought Hardy another publishing success. The ensuing years would bring him a constant rise in literary popularity. Hardy set all his novels in the fictional part of south and south-west England which he called Wessex.

## Love and marriage

When Hardy was occupied in the restoration of a church in St. Juliot, near the site of the legendary Castle Tintagel, King Arthur's Camelot in Cornwall in 1870, he met for the first time Emma Lavinia Gifford, the local rector's sister-in-law. He was captivated by both her looks and admiration for him. Emma, who was attracted by Hardy's literary interests, encouraged him to write fiction and poetry. They soon fell in love with each other but waited four years to be married at St Peters Church, Paddington, London, on 17 September 1874. Curiously enough, none of Hardy's family attended the wedding ceremony, which was performed by Canon Edwin Hamilton Gifford, Emma's uncle, who later became Archdeacon of London. When they married, they were both thirty years old, but Hardy thought she looked much younger and she thought he looked much older. The first years of their marriage were quite happy. The couple spent their honeymoon in Paris and travelled extensively in England and on the Continent. However, in later years, Emma felt more and more estranged from her husband. She did not entirely approve of the content of his fictions, and last but not least, his romantic attachments to young artistic ladies, such as Florence Henniker, Rosamund Tomson, and Agnes Grove. Emma kept a secret diary in which she recorded her remarks and her complaints about her husband.

## Max Gate

In 1885, the couple settled near Dorchester at Max Gate, a large mid-Victorian villa, which Hardy had designed himself where he lived for the rest of his life. In 1895-96 and 1907, Hardy made significant extensions and alterations to the house, including enlarging the kitchen and refurbishing his study. Hardy felt extremely comfortable at Max Gate, which he often called his country retreat. In 1886, his second tragic novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, was published. Its fictional setting resembles old Dorchester, a market town which Hardy knew very well. In 1887, Hardy and his wife Emma took a trip to Italy. They returned to Max Gate via Paris and London. In 1896, Emma introduced Hardy to the new fashionable sport of cycling. Hardy bought himself an expensive Rover Cobb bike, and the couple frequently toured the Dorset countryside. Apart from cycling, Hardy and his wife used to make annual visits to London in spring or summer. They attended theatres, operas, and social gatherings. After spending the summer 1896 in London, the Hardys extended their holidays and visited three English towns: Worcester, Stratford and Dover. Next they went to Belgium. Hardy saw the historic Field of Waterloo, where Napoleon was defeated. He

had already made a plan of his epic drama *The Dynasts*, devoted to the history of Napoleonic wars.

## Return to poetry

The publication of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1891 shocked and dismayed the Victorian public with its presentation of a young beautiful girl seduced by an aristocratic villain. In order to have the novel published, Hardy made some concessions about its plot; extensive passages were either severely modified or deleted outright. The same happened to his last novel, *Jude the Obscure*, published in book form in 1895. In 1898, disturbed by the public uproar over the reception of his two greatest novels, Hardy announced that he had ceased to write prose fiction. He returned to poetry, which he regarded as a purer art form than prose fiction. As a young man he could not make enough money to live on by writing poetry, so he had decided to write novels. However, after giving up the novel in adulthood, Hardy published a collection of his earlier poems under the title *Wessex Poems* (1898).

Between 1903 and 1908 Hardy wrote mostly in blank verse a great panorama of the Napoleonic wars, the epic drama *The Dynasts*. His literary authority was beyond dispute. In 1905, he was awarded an honorary degree at the University of Aberdeen and recognised as one of the most outstanding British authors. In 1910, King George V conferred on him the Order of Merit, and in 1912 he received the gold medal of the Royal Society of Literature. In 1913, Hardy, who had never graduated from college, received Cambridge honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. His popularity grew immensely and his novels were reprinted, some of them being dramatised and performed on stage. In 1914, the adaptation of *The Dynasts* was performed at the Kingsway Theatre, London. Between 1911 and 1914 Hardy disposed of most of his manuscripts; some of them were deposited in public libraries and museums, others were purchased, mostly by American dealers and collectors.

## Emma's death and second marriage

The sudden death on 27th November 1912 of Hardy's wife Emma, with whom he had long been estranged, threw him into a complete disarray. After her funeral and burial in Stinsford churchyard, Hardy reproached himself that he had not realised how seriously ill she was. The death of his wife prompted him to write a number of poems that recalled his happy time with Emma when they were young. After Emma's death Hardy did not remain alone at Max Gate. He was taken care of by his niece and a young woman, Florence Dugdale (1879-1937), who had been introduced to him while Emma was still alive. Florence was a Dorset schoolmaster's daughter. She was a shy, charming woman with some literary aspirations who had published a few books for children and also written poetry, though with little success. Occasionally she did research for Hardy in London when he could not do it himself. Hardy became infatuated with the young woman who admired him as a great writer, and on 6 February 1914, he married Florence, who was almost forty years younger than he. Sadly, his second marriage soon proved to be disappointing as the first one, mainly

due to the fact that Hardy was fond of “spending much of each day closeted in his study”. (Page, 166)

## Final years

During the First World War Hardy was in his seventies. In spite of advanced age, he took an active part in campaigns defending Britain’s involvement in the war. He visited military hospitals and POW camps. In his last years Hardy rarely left Max Gate although he remained vital; he was still interested in world affairs. Regarded as the most outstanding writer of his time, he was frequently visited at Max Gate by writers, artists and politicians. His guests included James Barrie, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, A. E. Housman, Siegfried Sassoon, H. G. Wells, Robert Graves, Edmund Blunden, George Bernard Shaw, Virginia Woolf, and many others.

From 1920 until 1927, he worked secretly on his autobiography, which was published in two volumes (1928 and 1930) as the work of Florence Hardy. It was later alleged that Florence had only typed the manuscript and added some minor corrections, but in fact, Florence’s emendations into the text seem to have been extensive. She probably reduced the number of references to Emma, included some anecdotes related to Hardy and added a few letters. Hardy destroyed almost all papers which he did not want to leave after his death. In 1924, he watched a dramatised version of his novel *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* given by the Hardy Players, an amateur group from Dorchester. The performance was so impressive that Hardy, despite his eighty years, became infatuated with the young actress who played Tess.

After his eighty-seventh birthday Hardy seemed much weaker than before. He did not leave Max Gate and stayed long in bed. He became increasingly reclusive and reticent about his past life. In the autumn 1927 he fell seriously ill. He died on the evening of 11 January 1928. Before he died, he asked his wife to read a verse from *The Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam (Gittings, 640):

**Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,  
And ev’n with Paradise devise the snake:  
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man  
Is blackened — Man’s forgiveness give — and take!**

Strangely enough, Hardy had two simultaneous funerals. His body was cremated and placed (probably against his will) in the Poet’s Corner ([image](#)) in Westminster Abbey in London. The official funeral was attended by the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and the Leader of the Opposition Ramsay MacDonald, heads of Oxford and Cambridge colleges, where Hardy was an honorary fellow, and some outstanding literary figures like James Barrie, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, Edmund Gosse, A. E. Housman, Rudyard Kipling and George Bernard Shaw. At exactly the same time Hardy’s heart was buried alongside his first wife in Stinsford churchyard, Dorchester. The private service at Stinsford Church was attended by his brother Henry and local people who resembled characters from Hardy’s novels. Hardy left an estate of nearly 100,000 pounds which was divided among his wife, relatives, various libraries, museums and charities. As Evelyn Hardy wrote:

Hardy's life was not primarily one of action. He was by nature a scholar and a writer: it is what goes on in the mind that holds us, and Hardy's was rich with stored impressions. [2]

In his long and uneventful life Thomas Hardy wrote 14 novels, more than 40 short stories published in four volumes, over 900 poems and two dramas. Apart from his prose works and poetry, Hardy left a great number of letters, notebooks, pocket-books, diaries and memoranda, but most of them were burned in accordance with his last will. Only twelve of them survived. They are the "Architectural Notebook", the "Trumpet Major Notebook", the "Schools of Painting" notebook, the "Studies, Specimens, etc.", the "1867" notebook, the volumes of "Literary Notes", "Memoranda" and the "Facts" notebook. All have been published over the last fifty years.

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Hardy, Evelyn. *Thomas Hardy. A Critical Biography*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1954.

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Tomalin, Claire. *Thomas Hardy: The Time-Torn Man*. New York: Penguin Press, 2007.

Turner, Paul. *The Life of Thomas Hardy*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001.

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## [2] Thomas Hardy Biography:

**[Resource:** <https://www.notablebiographies.com/Gi-He/Hardy-Thomas.html> **]**

**Born: June 2, 1840**

**Higher Bockhampton, Dorset, England**

**Died: January 11, 1928**

**Dorchester, England**

*English author, novelist, poet, and dramatist*

The works of the English novelist, poet, and dramatist Thomas Hardy unite the Victorian (c. 1840–1900) and modern eras. They reveal him to be a kind and gentle man, terribly aware of the pain human beings suffer in their struggle for life.



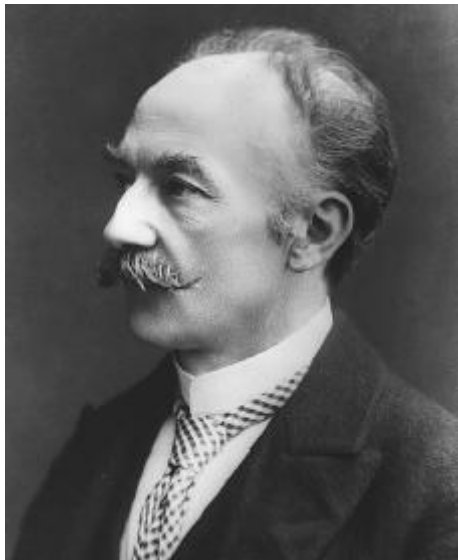
## Childhood

Thomas Hardy was born on June 2, 1840, in Higher Bockhampton in Dorset, England, which formed part of the "Wessex" of his novels and poems. The first of four children, Hardy was born small and thought at birth to be dead. He grew to be a small man only a little over five feet tall. Hardy learned to love books through his mother, Jemina, and was able to read before starting school. He was taught by his father, also named Thomas, to play the violin, and he often journeyed about the countryside playing for dances and storing up the impressions of rural life that make up so large a part of his work.

Hardy attended a private school in Dorchester, England, where he learned Latin, French, and German. In 1856 at the age of sixteen, Hardy became an apprentice (a person who works for someone in order to gain experience in a trade) to John Hicks, an architect in Dorchester. At this time, he thought seriously of attending university and entering the Church, but he did not do so. In 1862 he went to London, England, to work. Also at this time, Hardy began writing poetry after being impressed by Reverend William Barnes, a local poet.

## Early writings

In London Hardy continued to write poetry and began sending his poems to publishers, who quickly returned them. He kept



Thomas Hardy.  
*Reproduced by permission of*  
Archive Photos, Inc.

many of the poems and published them in 1898 and afterward. Back in Dorchester in 1867 while working for Hicks, he wrote a novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, which he was advised not to publish because it was too critical of Victorian society. Told to write a novel with a plot, he turned out *Desperate Remedies* (1871), which was unsuccessful.

Meanwhile Hardy had begun to work for Gerald Crickmay, who had taken over Hicks's business. Crickmay sent Hardy to Cornwall, England, where on March 7, 1870, he met Emma Lavinia Gifford, with whom he fell in love. Hardy could have kept on with architecture, but he was a "born bookworm," as he said, and in spite of his lack of success with literature he decided to continue writing, hoping eventually to make enough money so he could marry Gifford. Their courtship is recorded in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and in some of Hardy's most beautiful poems, among them "When I Set Out for Lyonesse" and "Beeny Cliff."

For *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) he earned 30 pounds and the book was well received. At the same time, he was asked to write a novel for serialization (published in parts) in a magazine. In September 1872 *A Pair of Blue Eyes* began to appear, even though only a few chapters had been completed. *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), was published in magazines and was a success both financially and critically. Finally making a living from literature, Hardy married Gifford in September of 1874.

## Later novels

Hardy preferred his poetry to his prose (nonpoetry writings) and thought his novels merely a way to earn a living. But his best novels—*The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891)—were much more than magazine fiction. The people were dominated by the countryside of "Wessex," Hardy's name for the area in southwest England where he set most of his novels, and the area is as memorable as the people.

Good or bad, Hardy's novels brought him money, fame, and acquaintance with greatness. With his wife he travelled in Germany, France, and Italy; he built Max Gate near Dorchester, where he lived from 1886 until his death; he frequently dined out, meeting poets Matthew Arnold (1822–1888), Robert Browning (1812–1889), Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), and others. Writer Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) sought him out and visited him at Max Gate. It was a successful life and seemed happy enough, but he had a strained relationship with his wife.

Though Hardy's novels seldom end happily, he was not, he stated, a pessimist (taking the least hopeful view of a situation). He called himself a "meliorist," one who believed that man can live with some happiness if he understands his place in the universe and accepts it. He ceased to be a Christian, and he read the works of naturalist Charles Darwin (1809–1892) and accepted the idea of evolution, the theory that animals, including man, developed from earlier species. Later he took to reading philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) and developed the notion of the Immanent Will, the blind force that drives the universe and in the distant future may see and understand itself.

## Poetry and drama

Collecting new and old poems, Hardy published *Wessex Poems* (1898) and *Poems of the Past and Present* (1902). Then he began to publish *The Dynasts*, an immense drama of the Napoleonic Wars (a series of wars from 1792 to 1815 between France and different European powers) which depicts all the characters, even French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), as a puppet whose actions are determined by the Immanent Will. The "epic-drama" evolved into nineteen acts and 130 scenes and was published in three parts in 1903, 1905, and 1908. Meant to be read, not acted, it is frequently called Hardy's masterwork.

Meanwhile Hardy continued to publish his shorter verse in *Time's Laughingstocks* (1909). His most famous single volume of poems, *Satires of Circumstance*, appeared in 1914. It revealed the extremes of Hardy's emotional range in the short, bitter poems referred to in the title and the longer poems about his first wife, who died in 1912. *Selected Poems* (1916), *Moments of Vision* (1917), *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922), and *Human Shows* (1925) were published during the remainder of his life. *Winter Words* (1928) was published after his death.

Because in most cases Hardy published his poems years after he wrote them, the dates of when he wrote these pieces can be determined only by his references to them in *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy* or *The Later Years*. Because of this it is difficult to show Hardy's growth as a poet. In fact, he hardly grew at all. In almost all his poems Hardy uses Victorian diction (choice of words), regular meters (rhythm), and neat stanzas (divisions within a poem). These cause him to be called a Victorian poet, but he also uses everyday words. These, with his dark view of the human condition and his blending of humor and pity, rank him with modern poets.

In 1914 Hardy married Florence Emily Dugdale, who had been his secretary for several years. He continued to receive famous visitors at Max Gate and continued to visit London for special occasions. He died on January 11, 1928. His heart was buried in the churchyard at Stinsford, England, his ashes in Westminster Abbey.

## For More Information

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## [3] Thomas Hardy

**[Resource:** <https://literarydevices.net/thomas-hardy/>**]**

### Early Life

Thomas Hardy was born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June in 1840 in Higher Bockhampton, England. His father Thomas Hardy Sr. was a local builder, while his mother, Jemima, was a simple lady. He spent an isolated life amidst nature, enjoying the pleasures of rural life. He was greatly influenced by the environment he grew up in. His father left him in 1892 and his mother died twelve years later.

### Education

Thomas spent his early life in the rural area. He was educated by his parents, especially his mother who actively transferred her love for literature to her son. Later, he went to Last's Academy for Young men, where he received groundings in French, German mathematics and Latin. Unfortunately, his formal education ended at the age of sixteen and he did not get a chance to pursue higher education. In 1856, he became an apprentice to an architect, John Hicks. At this time, he decided to pursue his education. However, he could not act on his desire. In 1862, inspired by his skills, Hicks sent him to King's College, England, where he studied architecture. It was in the same year he was impressed by the local poet, Reverend Barnes and started writing his literary pieces.

### Marriage

Since he established his career as an architect, he left for Cornwell on some architectural tasks. There, he met and fell in love with Emma Gifford, and the couple tied the knot in 1874. By that time, he had fully developed his writing skills. Unfortunately, Emma's death in 1912 left him devastated. To overcome his grief, he married Florence Emily Dugdale, his secretary, who was thirty-nine years junior to him. Sadly, the second marriage could not help him come out of his mental agony. However, he reflected this depression in his poems and dedicated many poems, [short stories](#) and a [play](#) to his first wife, Emma.

### Death

Thomas Hardy, a prominent Victorian realist, led a traumatic life after the death of his first wife. Also, he was terrified by the destruction caused by World War I. In 1927, he fell ill with the chest infection and died at Max Gate in 1928. Before his death, he wrote the last [poem](#) as a dedication to his first wife. He wanted to be buried near his [beloved](#) wife, Emma, at Stinsford. However, his friends and family concurred as they wanted to bury him at the Poet's Corner. Finally,

they reached an agreement that his heart would be buried next to Emma and his ashes in Poet's Corner of Westminster's Abbey.

## Some Important Facts of His Life

1. His literary efforts and huge contribution to literature made him win Order of the Merit in 1910 and was nominated for Noble Prize for twelve times.
2. After his death, he was remembered as the last of the Great Victorians.

## Writing Career

Thomas Hardy will remain as a great literary figure. He successfully pursued two careers in life; first as an apprentice and later as a poet and writer. He started writing at the age of seventeen after inspired by Reverend William Barnes, but the publishers did not pay heed to his early pieces. Later, in 1865, he published his first [prose](#) work, *A Humorous Sketch*, which won a welcome reception he wanted to pursue his poetic skills more vigorously than prose. In the next three years, he wrote, *The Poor Man and The Lady*. His friend, George Meredith advised him not to publish this work, believing that this [novel](#) will not be accepted by the Victorian Society. Thomas took his friend's advice, but never gave up on writing. In 1870 he published a novel, *Desperate Remedies*, followed by [The Return of the Native](#) in 1874. Between 1878 and 1912 he produced three volumes of short [stories](#), nine more novels, three collections of poems and *The Dynasts*, a dramatic [lyric](#). However, the cold reception and biting criticism against his last novel, *Jude the Obscure*, forced him to turn toward poetry.

## His Style

Thomas Hardy's unique ideas contributed a lot to the diverse world of literature and put his name in the list of one of the greatest literary men. His indifferent [style](#) can be seen in his [epic dramas](#) and [ballads](#). He presented meticulous descriptions of [characters](#) and events which are not confined to humans; even [animal](#) and blissful nature played a crucial role in his texts. Moreover, he applied sexual [imagery](#) explicitly in his pieces and applied the modern style of writing in his novels. Also, his poetry is equipped with versatility, musicality, control of language and vitality. In most of his poems, Thomas used old English to prevent it from losing in the face of [neologisms](#). The recurring [themes](#) in most of his writings are death, loss, loneliness, death, and life.

## Thomas Hardy's Famous Works



- **Best Poems:** Thomas Hardy has produced many masterpieces. Some of his best poems include “The Darkling Thrush”, “Neutral Tunes”, “[The Convergence of the Twain](#)”, “[The Man He Killed](#)”, “The [Voice](#)” and “The Ruined Maid.”
- **Best Novels:** Besides poetry, he tried his hands on novels. Some of his best novels include *The Poor Man and The Lady*, *Under the Greenwood Tree*, *Jude to Obscure*, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* and [The Return of the Native](#).

## Thomas Hardy's Impact on Future Literature

Thomas Hardy's indifferent style has left deep imprints on the English as well as international literature. His distinctive writing approach and unique way of expression made him stand out among the best Victorian Poets. His thoughtful ideas influenced many great poets and writers including, D. H. Lawrence, John Cowper Powys, and Edward Driffield. He successfully documented his ideas and feelings in his writings that even today writers try to imitate his unique style, considering him a beacon for writing prose and poetry.

## Famous Quotes

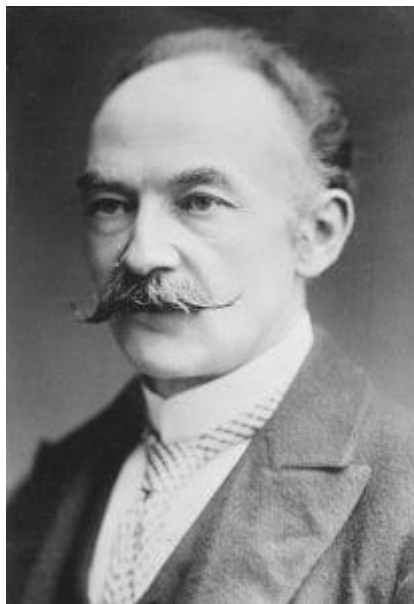
1. “A strong woman who recklessly throws away her strength, she is worse than a weak woman who has never had any strength to throw away.” (*Tess of the D’Urbervilles*)
2. “You have never loved me as [I love you](#)—never—never! Yours is not a passionate heart—your heart does not burn in a flame! You are, upon the whole, a sort of fay, or sprite— not a woman!” (*Jude the Obscure*)
3. “They spoke very little of their mutual feeling; pretty [phrases](#) and warm expressions being probably unnecessary between such tried friends.” (*Far From the Madding Crowd*)
4. “[Beauty](#) lay not in the thing, but in what the thing symbolized.” (*Tess of the D’Urbervilles*)

## Related posts:

- [Thomas Hood](#)
- [Amber Flora Thomas](#)
- [Thomas Stearns Eliot](#)
- [The Voice](#)
- [Neutral Tones](#)
- [The Man He Killed](#)
- [The Convergence of the Twain](#)
- [The Return of the Native](#)
- [During Wind and Rain](#)
- [A Sheep Fair](#)

## [4] Thomas Hardy

[Resource: <https://sites.udel.edu/britlitwiki/thomas-hardy/>]



### Background Information

Thomas Hardy was born on June 2, 1840 in Higher Bockhampton in Southwest England to Jemima and Thomas Hardy; he was the third Thomas Hardy in as many generations (Tomalin 3). Hardy was a frail child with an affinity for animals and music (he played fiddle most of his life) and a passion for reading (Tomalin 19). At ten, with the driving will of his mother, Hardy enrolled in a private school in Dorchester where his serious education began (Tomalin 31). In 1862, in order to help with the finances, Hardy's parents apprenticed him to the architect John Hicks. Throughout his apprenticeship, however, Hardy maintained his intellectual studies in private, reading Latin and Greek, and he became close with Horace Moule, the precocious son of a local preacher. Horace, eight years his senior, became Hardy's best friend and mentor, giving him access to new books and ideas and engaging in intellectual debates with him.

After abandoning his hopes at attending a university because of his financial situation and social rank, Hardy moved to London to pursue his architectural career under Arthur Blomfield and steep himself in London's high culture. It was here that Hardy finish his first novel in 1868, *The Poor Man and the Lady*. Although no copy of it survives, the book was apparently too radical and salacious to publish; after 14 months, Hardy gave up and altered his style, making it more conventional in order to better suit society's tastes (Tomalin 91). A few years later, in 1871, his novel *Desperate Remedies* was published, and he realized his true calling as a writer (Tomalin 113).

Hardy eventually became dissatisfied with city life and moved back to Dorset County, where he continued to write increasingly successful novels. *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1871) was one of his first great commercial successes, and his *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1873) received commercial and critical acclamation. It was also in 1873 that Horace Moule, a long sufferer of depression, committed suicide, an act which profoundly upset and would haunt Hardy. Soon afterwards, September 17, 1874, Hardy married Emma Gifford, the daughter of a well-born but poor family with literary ambitions. Although both their parents objected to the match, Hardy was quite taken by Emma's class status. Their relationship, however, soon soured as Hardy, a bit of a womanizer, lost interest in her and flirted with other young women.

By the 1880s, Hardy was becoming seriously noticed by audiences and critics. Sales of his novel *The Hand of Ethelberta* were good enough to begin distribution in America. In 1878, he was inducted into the Savile Club and he was meeting other famous English writers such as Matthew Arnold and Robert Lewis Stevenson. Hardy and Emma move into Max Gate, a modest country house that Hardy designed, in 1885, where he was to carry out the rest of his life. In 1891 and 1895, Hardy publishes his two perhaps best-known novels, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The two books were fiercely castigated for their bleak content and candid depictions of sexuality (*Tess* includes a scene of rape and in *Jude* a child commits suicide). Although the controversy granted Hardy tremendous fame, it also brought great stress. Disgusted with his critics and readers, Hardy gave up novel writing after *Jude* and turned almost exclusively to poetry.

Emma, his estranged wife who was now living alone in the attic of Max Gate, died in 1912; although he had acted coldly toward her during life, Hardy was crushed at her loss. He married Florence Dugdale, 39 years his junior, who had been helping him with his writing, but he produced a prolific amount of elegiac poetry

for the deceased Emma (to Florence's consternation). Hardy continued to write until he died of a heart attack on January 11, 1928. Upon his death, Hardy was cremated and buried in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, but his heart was removed and buried separately outside Stinsford Church, Dorchester, near his country home.

Complete List of Novels	Poetry Collections	Collections of Short Fiction
<i>Desperate Remedies</i>	<i>Wessex Poems and Other Verses</i>	<i>Wessex Tales</i>
<i>Under the Greenwood Tree</i>	<i>Poems of the Past and the Present</i>	<i>A Group of Noble Dames</i>
<i>A Pair of Blue Eyes</i>	<i>Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses</i>	<i>Life's Little Irony's</i>
<i>Far From the Madding Crowd</i>	<i>Satires of Circumstance, Lyrics, and Reveries</i>	<i>A Changed Man</i>
<i>The Hand of Ethelberta</i>	<i>Moments of Vision and Miscellaneous Verses</i>	
<i>The Return of the Native</i>	<i>Late Lyrics and Earlier</i>	
<i>The Trumpet-Major</i>	<i>Human Shows, Far Phantasies, Songs, and Trifles</i>	

<i>A Laodicean</i>	<i>Winter Words in Various Moods and Mètres</i>	
<i>Two on a Tower</i>	<i>The Dynasts (drama in verse)</i>	
<i>The Mayor of Casterbridge</i>		
<i>The Woodlanders</i>		
<i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>		
<i>The Well-Beloved</i>		
<i>Jude the Obscure</i>		



Max Gate: the home Hardy build for himself in Dorchester and where he lived for the latter part of his life.



## Poetry

[During Wind and Rain](#)

[The Phantom Horsewoman](#)

[Nature in the Late-Victorian Imagination \(The Convergence of the Twain\)](#)

## Short Stories

[The Three Strangers](#)

## Timeline of Hardy's Life

[Thomas Hardy 1840-1928](#)

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## [5] Thomas Hardy

**[Resource:** [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Thomas\\_Hardy](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Thomas_Hardy)]

**Thomas Hardy** (June 2, 1840 – January 11, 1928) was a novelist, short story writer, and poet of the naturalist school, who delineated characters struggling against their passions and circumstances. The majority of his work, set mainly in the semi-imaginary county of Wessex, is marked by Hardy's largely pessimistic views on humanity. He saw man as doomed to a tragic fate from which there was no real possibility of escape, views arguably influenced by his own reception as a writer. Hardy was notoriously underappreciated during his life. Like [Herman Melville](#), he began his career as a modestly popular writer of novels, but as he grew older and became more and more daring, his readership (and the critics) quickly turned against him, leaving him bitter and destitute toward the end of his life.

Despite the dark tone of Hardy's oeuvre—or perhaps because of it—he is a remarkably penetrating writer. As a novelist he is comparable to [Honore de Balzac](#), [Emile Zola](#), and [Henry James](#) in his ability to reveal a whole inner world of thought and desire, through meticulous observation of his characters and their actions.

Although Hardy remains primarily regarded as a novelist, he considered his poetry to be his most substantial contribution to literature. He wrote poetry as a young man, gave it up for fiction (which proved more profitable), and returned to poetry after abandoning novel-writing for good. Hardy's poetry, like his late novels, is remarkably modern. Like that of [Robert Frost](#) or [Wallace Stevens](#), Hardy's poetry possesses a uniquely modern sensibility while retaining the formal traditions of rhyme and meter characteristic of most poetry prior to [modernism](#). [Philip Larkin](#) was a great proponent of Hardy's poetry, and it is largely due to his efforts that Hardy, slowly, has entered the modernist canon, ranked alongside [William Butler Yeats](#) as one of the foremost English innovators of his times.

## Biography

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Thomas Hardy was born at Higher Bockhampton, a hamlet in the parish of Stinsford, Dorset. His father was a stonemason and local builder. His mother was ambitious and well-read, supplementing his formal education, which ended at the age of 16 when he became apprenticed to John Hicks, a local architect. Hardy trained as an architect in Dorchester before moving to [London](#). He won prizes from the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Architectural Association.

In 1874, Hardy married Emma Lavinia Gifford, the subject of his later work *A Pair of Blue Eyes*. Although Hardy became estranged from his wife, her death in 1912 had a traumatic effect on him. He made a trip to Cornwall to revisit places linked with her and with their courtship, and wrote a series of poems exploring his grief, *Poems of 1912-13*, which are now estimated to be some of the finest verses of the early twentieth century. In 1914 he married Florence Dugdale, 40 years his junior, whom he had met in 1905. The writer [Robert Graves](#), in his autobiography *Goodbye to All That*, recalls meeting Hardy in Dorset in the early 1920s. Hardy received Graves and his newly married wife warmly, encouraging the younger author's work.

Hardy was an [agnostic](#), and some would claim him to be an [atheist](#). Despite these beliefs, Hardy had a strong emotional attachment to the Christian liturgy and church rituals—particularly as manifested in rural communities. These had been a formative influence in his early years, and as a young man Hardy had long nurtured a desire to become a member of the clergy. Some attributed the bleak outlook of many of his novels as a reflection on his later loss of [faith](#). Hardy fell ill with pleurisy in December 1927 and died in January 1928, having dictated his final poem to his wife on his deathbed. His funeral, on January 16 at [Westminster Abbey](#), was a controversial occasion: his family and friends had wished him to be buried at Stinsford but his executor, Sir Sydney Carlyle

Cockerell, insisted he should be placed in Poets' Corner. A macabre compromise was reached permitting his heart to be buried at Stinsford with Emma while his ashes were interred in the abbey.

Hardy's cottage at Bockhampton and Max Gate in Dorchester is owned by the National Trust. Hardy's work was admired by authors [D.H. Lawrence](#) and [Virginia Woolf](#). In 1910 he was appointed as a Member of the Order of Merit.

## Novels

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Hardy's major novels are located in the fictional county of Wessex (named after the Anglo-Saxon kingdom which existed in the area). The landscape was modeled on the real counties of Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire, with fictional places based on real locations. He captured the epoch just before the railways and the [industrial revolution](#) changed the English countryside. Hardy's works are pessimistic and bitterly ironic; his writing is rough but capable of immense power. Hardy had an eye for poignant detail, such as the spreading bloodstain on the ceiling at the end of *Tess* or little Jude's suicide note in *Jude The Obscure*; he kept clippings from newspaper reports of real events and used them as details in his novels.

His first novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, finished in 1867, failed to find a publisher and Hardy destroyed the manuscript. Only parts of the novel remain. He was encouraged to try again by mentor and friend, Victorian poet and novelist, [George Meredith](#). *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872) were published anonymously. In 1873 *A Pair of Blue Eyes* was published under his own name. The story draws on Hardy's courtship of Emma Gifford, whom he married in 1874. His next novel, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), was his first important work. In *Far from the Madding Crowd* Hardy first introduced Wessex. The novel was successful enough for Hardy to give up architectural work and pursue a literary career. Over the next 25 years Hardy produced ten more novels, the best of which he classified as "novels of character and environment." Hardy's work emphasized the impersonal and, generally, negative powers of fate over the mainly working-class people he represented in his novels.

The Hardys moved from [London](#) to Yeovil and then to Sturminster Newton, where he wrote *The Return of the Native* (1878). In 1885 they returned to Dorchester, moving into Max Gate—a house that Hardy had designed himself. There Hardy wrote *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), and *The Woodlanders* (1887). *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) attracted criticism for its sympathetic portrayal of a "fallen woman," and was initially refused publication. Its subtitle, *A Pure Woman*, was intended to raise the eyebrows of the Victorian middle-classes. Critics denounced it at the time and when *Jude the Obscure* was published, in 1895, it was met with even stronger negative

outcries by the Victorian public for its frank treatment of sex. It was referred to as "Jude the Obscene," and was heavily criticized for its apparent attack on the institution of marriage. The novel caused further strain on Hardy's already difficult marriage due to Emma's concern that it would be read as autobiographical. Some booksellers sold the novel in brown paper bags and the Bishop of Wakefield is reputed to have burned a copy. Disgusted with the public reception of two of his mature works, Hardy gave up writing novels altogether. Later critics have commented that there was very little left for Hardy to write, having creatively exhausted the increasingly fatalistic tone of his novels.

## **Tess of the d'Urbervilles**

### Summary

Tess is Hardy's penultimate novel and regarded as one of Hardy's highest achievements. Tess is often considered to be a fuller, more rounded novel than *Jude* due its setting and style which so closely recalls the comedies of manners and bucolic love stories of the novelists of Hardy's time, which Hardy uses but inverts and turns into tragedy as the story proceeds. Unlike *Jude*, the tragedy of Tess unfolds with more subtlety, without the transparent hand of the author manipulating events as in the later novel.

The story concerns a simple country girl, Teresa "Tess" Durbeyfield, the daughter of uneducated (and rather shiftless) peasants. Tess's father hears from a local clergyman (Parson Tringham) that apparently the Durbeyfields are descendants of the [medieval](#) noble family d'Urberville. He sends her to the local nouveau-riche (Stoke)-d'Urberville family, where Tess begins working, attracting the attention of the playboy son of the household, Alec D'Urberville. In a rape scene (although the scene is open to interpretation), Tess is seduced and impregnated by Alec. She returns home in disgrace, but the child she bears soon dies, leaving her free to leave her village once again to look for work. In hope of leaving her disgraced identity, she applies for employment at a dairy forty miles away. While employed as a milkmaid, she encounters the morally upright son of a minister, Angel Clare, who falls in love with her. Tess agrees to marry Angel after he asks several times, but on their wedding night, she confesses that she is not a virgin and explains what happened with Alec d'Urberville. Although Angel had also engaged in an affair out of wedlock, he becomes upset, unable to reconcile his real affection for Tess, his wounded pride, and his image of Tess as a virginal [Mary](#) figure. Angel abandons Tess and tells her she cannot contact him; he will contact her.

She briefly goes back to her family, but ashamed, she leaves to find work as a day laborer working with then-new threshing machines. Meanwhile, Alec D'Urberville claims to be a reborn believer, converted through the exhortations

of Angel's father (who is a passionate preacher). Out of lust, Alec pursues Tess, who is repulsed by his "conversion," so Alec quickly abandons his religious zeal. He keeps offering her financial security, companionship, and relief from her backbreaking work, but Tess strongly refuses. Alec degrades her and repeatedly blames Tess for transfixing him. Meanwhile, Tess learns that her mother is gravely ill. Tess returns home to discover that her mother has recovered but her father has died. The family then loses the lease on their cottage and is forced to travel the countryside with all their possessions, searching for lodgings and employment. At this point, Alec d'Urberville reappears and a desperate Tess agrees to become his mistress so that she can support her family.

Angel Clare has been in Brazil and after much thought returns to England to find Tess. He discovers her living in a hotel with Alec d'Urberville, well cared-for but miserable. Tess murders Alec to run away with Angel. They flee together on foot, but the police catch up with them at Stonehenge in a memorable finale. When Tess and Angel were fleeing, Tess asked Angel to marry her younger sister, Liza-Lu, who is a pure version of Tess. Together, Liza-Lu and Angel watch a black flag go up as Tess is hanged for the murder of Alec.

In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, through the central themes of sex, class perceptions, material longing and family betrayal, Hardy manages to suggest the ambiguities of time and change and divine power versus human reason.

## Symbolism and Themes

Hardy's writing is often considered to illustrate the "ache of modernism," and this theme is notable in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. The heavy machinery seen in Flintcomb-Ash is portrayed with infernal imagery, and at the dairy, it is reported that the milk sent to the city has to be watered down because the townspeople can't stomach whole milk. These are but two examples among many in which Hardy symbolizes the negative consequences of man's separation from nature. Hardy's view of Victorian England has echoes of the Romantic view of nature in such writers as [Wordsworth](#) and [Coleridge](#) who, decades earlier, had first sounded the warning at the growing influence of industry.

Within the iconography of the novel, Tess, who is abused by representatives of both high culture and Christianity, represents an earthly ideal through the numerous naturalist references made about her throughout the text. Early in the novel she participates in a festival for Ceres, the goddess of the harvest, and when she performs a baptism she chooses a passage from [Genesis](#), the book of creation, over more traditional New Testament verses. The episode at [Stonehenge](#), commonly believed to be a pagan temple at the time of the novel's writing, has resonance with the notion of the pagan goddess. The novel portrays Hardy's pessimistic attitudes toward the forces of civilization—religion



and high society—as deceitful forces that ultimately doom corrupt and destroy the natural good heroine.

## Poetry

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In 1898 Hardy published his first volume of [poetry](#), *Wessex Poems*, a collection of poems written over 30 years. Hardy claimed poetry was his first love, and published collections until his death in 1928. His poetry was not as well received by his contemporaries as his novels had been, but critical response to Hardy's poetry has warmed considerably in recent years, in part because of the influence of [Philip Larkin](#). However, critically his poetry is still not considered as highly as his prose.

The poems deal with themes of disappointment in love and life, and mankind's long struggle against indifference to human suffering. A vein of regret tinges his often seemingly banal themes. His poems range in style from the three-volume epic closet drama *Dynasts* to smaller, and often hopeful or even cheerful poems of the moment such as the little-known “The Children and Sir Nameless,” a comic poem inspired by the tombs of the Martyns, builders of Athelhampton. “The Darkling Thrush” (1900) has elements typical of Hardy's work: the first person voice; an incident in nature triggering deep reflections; the bucolic setting; the desolate landscape; the struggle of small forces against inimical nature; the possibility of redemption.

I leant upon a coppice gate  
When Frost was spectre-grey,  
And Winter's dregs made desolate  
The weakening eye of day.  
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky  
Like strings of broken lyres,  
And all mankind that haunted nigh  
Had sought their household fires.  
The land's sharp features seemed to be  
The Century's corpse outleant,  
His crypt the cloudy canopy,  
The wind his death-lament.  
The ancient pulse of germ and birth  
Was shrunken hard and dry,  
And every spirit upon earth  
Seemed fervourless as I.  
At once a voice arose among  
The bleak twigs overhead  
In a full-hearted evensong  
Of joy illimited;  
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,  
In blast-beruffled plume,

Had chosen thus to fling his soul  
Upon the growing gloom.  
So little cause for carolings  
Of such ecstatic sound  
Was written on terrestrial things  
Afar or nigh around,  
That I could think there trembled through  
His happy good-night air  
Some blessèd Hope, whereof he knew  
And I was unaware.

## Legacy

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Hardy's career as writer spanned over 50 years and his works reflect the movement away from the Victorian values of such writers as [Charles Dickens](#) and [Anthony Trollope](#) toward a bleaker naturalistic [realism](#). His late poetry was published contemporaneously with the works of [modernist](#) poets [T.S. Eliot](#) and [Ezra Pound](#) and reflected modernism's loss of [faith](#) and meaning; and [alienation](#) from tradition.

Hardy challenged many of the sexual and religious conventions of the [Victorian age](#). Following the appearance [Charles Darwin's](#) *Origin of Species* (1859), Hardy increasingly adopted a deterministic view of life, observing in 1901 that "non-rationality seems... to be the [guiding] principle of the Universe." Tragic and self-destructive fates seem to haunt Hardy's characters. Impersonal forces or chance events often appear loaded against a Hardy protagonist, suggesting that morality was unequal to contend with fatalistic laws of the universe. In 1878, Hardy wrote in a notebook that "a Plot, or Tragedy, should arise from the gradual closing in of a situation that comes of ordinary human passions, prejudices, and ambitions, by reason of the characters taking no trouble to ward off the disastrous events produced by the said passions, prejudices, and ambitions."

As a realist, Hardy, like [Emile Zola](#) writing of industrialized France, described the burdensome condition of the rural laborers and the bleak lives of women. Hardy's harsh portrayal of English life and his moral ambiguities particularly influenced twentieth century novelist [D. H. Lawrence](#), whose *Study of Thomas Hardy* (1936) articulated Lawrence's own philosophy in such novels as *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920). Composers who have set Hardy's text to music include Gerald Finzi, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Gustav Holst. Holst based one of his last orchestral works, his much-acclaimed "Egdon Heath," on Hardy's work. Benjamin Britten based his song-cycle *Winter Words* on Hardy's poetry.

"Though he was a modern, even a revolutionary writer in his time, most of us read him now as a lyrical pastoralist, observed New York Times critic Anatole

Broyard in 1982. "It may be a sign of the times that some of us take his books to bed, as if even his pessimistic vision was one that enabled us to sleep soundly."

### [More Poems:](#)

- [The Dead Man Walking](#)
- [At Castle Boterel](#)
- [Afterwards](#)
- [On the Departure Platform](#)
- [The Robin](#)

## Bibliography

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### Prose

Hardy divided his novels into three classes.

### Novels of Character and Environment

- *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872)
- *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874)
- *The Return of the Native* (1878)
- *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886)
- *The Woodlanders* (1887)
- *Wessex Tales* (1888)
- *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891)
- *Life's Little Ironies* (1894)
- *Jude the Obscure* (1895)

### Romances and Fantasies

- *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873)
- *The Trumpet-Major* (1880)
- *Two on a Tower* (1882)
- *A Group of Noble Dames* (1891)
- *The Well-Beloved* (1897) (first published as a serial from 1892).

### Novels of Ingenuity

- *Desperate Remedies* (1871)
- *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876)

- *A Laodicean* (1881)

There are a number of minor tales and novels including, the unpublished *The Poor Man and the Lady*, written in 1867, and *Alicia's Diary* (1887). Hardy also wrote a few short stories, including "The Three Strangers" (1883).

## Poetry Collections

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- 
- *Wessex Poems* (1898)
- *Poems of the Past and Present* (1901)
- *The Dynasts* (1904)
- *The Dynasts, Part 2* (1906)
- *The Dynasts, Part 3* (1908)
- *Satires of Circumstance* (1914)
- *Collected Poems* (1919)
- *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922)
- *Human Shows* (1925)

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*ISBN links support NWE through referral fees*

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## External links

All links retrieved February 23, 2020.

- [Works by Thomas Hardy](#). Project Gutenberg
- [Essay on Hardy's Afterwards](#)
- [The Thomas Hardy Society](#)

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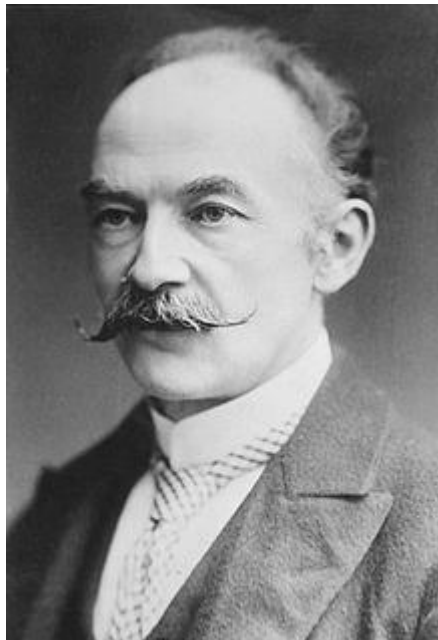
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## [6] Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

[Resource:

[https://www.academia.edu/6320173/Biography\\_of\\_Thomas\\_Hardy](https://www.academia.edu/6320173/Biography_of_Thomas_Hardy)]

### Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

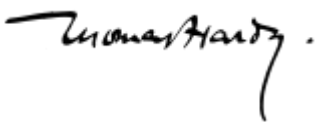


**Born**

2 June 1840

[Stinsford](#), Dorchester, Dorset, England



<b>Died</b>	11 January 1928 (aged 87) Dorchester, Dorset, England
<b>Resting place</b>	Stinsford parish church (heart) <a href="#">Poets' Corner</a> , <a href="#">Westminster Abbey</a> (ashes)
<b>Occupation</b>	Novelist, Poet, and Short Story writer
<b>Alma mater</b>	<a href="#">King's College London</a>
<b>Literary movement</b>	<a href="#">Naturalism</a> , <a href="#">Victorian literature</a>
<b>Notable work(s)</b>	<i><a href="#">Tess of the d'Urbervilles</a></i> , <i><a href="#">Far from the Madding Crowd</a></i> , <i><a href="#">Collected Poems</a></i> <i><a href="#">Jude the Obscure</a></i>
<b>Spouse(s)</b>	<a href="#">Emma Lavinia Gifford</a> (1874–1912) <a href="#">Florence Dugdale</a> (1914–28)
<b>Signature</b>	

## ◆ Contents ◆

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## Thomas Hardy

Thomas Hardy was born June 2, 1840 in the village of Upper Bockhampton, located in South-western England. His father was a stone-mason and a violinist. His mother enjoyed reading and retelling folk songs and legends popular in the region. From his family, Hardy gained the interests that would influence his life and appear in his novels: architecture and music, the lifestyles of the country folk, and literature itself.

Hardy attended Julia Martin's school in Oakhampton between the ages of 8 and 16. However, most of his education came from the books he found in Dorchester, the nearby town. He taught himself French, German, and Latin. At sixteen, Hardy's father apprenticed his son to a local architect, John Hicks. Under Hicks's tutelage, Hardy learned about architectural drawing and the restoration of old houses and churches. Hardy loved the apprenticeship because it allowed him to study the histories of the houses and the families that lived there. Despite his work, Hardy did not abandon his academics; in the evenings, Hardy would study with the Greek scholar Horace Moule.

In 1862, Hardy was sent to London to work with the architect Arthur Blomfield. During his five years in London, Hardy immersed himself in the cultural scene by visiting museums and theatres, and studying classic literature. He even began to write his own poetry. Although he did not remain in London, choosing instead to return to Dorchester as a church restorer, he maintained his newfound talent for writing.

From 1867, Hardy wrote poetry and novels, though the first part of his career was devoted mostly to novels. At first, he published anonymously, but after people became interested in his work, he began to use his own name. Like the work of his contemporary Charles Dickens, Hardy's novels were published serially in magazines, and they became popular in both England and America. His first popular novel was *Under the Greenwood Tree*, published in 1872. The next great novel, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), was so popular that the profits allowed Hardy to give up

architecture and marry Emma Gifford. Other popular novels followed in quick succession:

\* *The Return of the Native* (1878), \**The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887), \**Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), and \**Jude the Obscure* (1895). In addition to these long works, Hardy published three collections of short stories and five shorter novels, all moderately successful. However, despite the praise Hardy's fiction received, many critics were offended by their violence and sexual content, especially in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. The outcry against *Jude* was so great that Hardy decided to stop writing novels and return to his first great love, poetry.

Over the years, Hardy had divided his time between his home, Max Gate in Dorchester, and his lodgings in London. In his later years, he remained in Dorchester to focus completely on his poetry. In 1898, his dream of becoming a poet was realized with the publication of *Wessex Poems*. He then turned his attentions to an epic drama in verse, *The Dynasts*; it was finally completed in 1908. Before his death, he had written over 800 poems, many of which were published while he was in his eighties.

Hardy also found happiness late in his personal life. His first wife, Emma, died in 1912. Although their marriage had not been happy, Hardy grieved at her sudden death. In 1914, he married Florence Dugdale, and she was extremely devoted to him. By the last two decades of Hardy's life, he had achieved a level of fame equal to that of Dickens. In 1910, he was awarded the Order of Merit. New readers had also discovered his novels through the publication of the Wessex Editions, definitive versions of all Hardy's early works. As a result of this increased popularity, Max Gate became a literary shrine and a tourist attraction.

After a long and highly successful career, Thomas Hardy died on January 11, 1928, at the age of 87. His ashes were buried in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey. After his death, Florence published Hardy's autobiography in two parts under her own name. Hardy bequeathed many of his possessions to the nation, most notably his pens. Hardy personally engraved each bone handle with the name of the text it was used to write.

Although Hardy's novels were received badly by critics when they were first published, Hardy has been consistently recognized since his death as one of the great English novelists. He was an important influence on Modernism, and many later writers, including Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, and Robert Graves, named Hardy as influences. His poetry has been similarly influential; in the twentieth century, several classical composers, including Gustav Holst and Benjamin Britten, have set Hardy's poems to music.

During his lifetime, Hardy was frequently asked to allow his texts to be adapted for the emerging medium of film. He was far-sighted enough to see film's promotional benefits, and the attraction in widening his audience. However, early attempts at filming his work were less than satisfactory, despite Hardy's involvement in the process - most notably, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* in 1921. Perhaps as the depth of his stories is so often exemplified by the brooding internal conflicts of his strongest characters, it is almost impossible to truly capture the nuances of his work in other media.

## Novels

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Hardy's first novel, [\*The Poor Man and the Lady\*](#), finished by 1867, failed to find a publisher. He showed the novel to his mentor and friend, the Victorian poet and novelist, [George Meredith](#) who felt that *The Poor Man and the Lady* would be too politically controversial and might damage Hardy's ability to publish in the future. So Hardy followed his advice and gave up on trying to publish it. Later, he destroyed the manuscript so that no copies of it exist today.

After he abandoned his first novel, Hardy wrote two new ones that he hoped would have more commercial appeal, [\*Desperate Remedies\*](#) (1871) and [\*Under the Greenwood Tree\*](#) (1872) which he decided to publish anonymously.

In 1873 [\*A Pair of Blue Eyes\*](#), a novel drawing on Hardy's courtship of his first wife, was published under his own name. The term "[cliffhanger](#)" is considered to have originated with the serialised version of this story (which was published in [\*Tinsley's Magazine\*](#) between September 1872 and July 1873) in which Henry Knight, one of the protagonists, is left literally hanging off a cliff.

Hardy said that he first introduced [Wessex](#) in [\*Far from the Madding Crowd\*](#) (1874), his next novel. It was successful enough for Hardy to give up architectural work and pursue a literary career. Over the next twenty-five years Hardy produced ten more novels.

The Hardys moved from London to [Yeovil](#) and then to [Sturminster Newton](#), where he wrote [\*The Return of the Native\*](#) (1878). In 1885, they moved for the last time, to [Max Gate](#), a house outside Dorchester designed by Hardy and built by his brother. There he wrote [\*The Mayor of Casterbridge\*](#) (1886), [\*The Woodlanders\*](#) (1887), and [\*Tess of the d'Urbervilles\*](#) (1891), the last of which attracted criticism for its sympathetic portrayal of a "fallen woman" and was initially refused publication. Its subtitle, *A Pure Woman: Faithfully Presented*, was intended to raise the eyebrows of the Victorian middle classes.

[\*Jude the Obscure\*](#), published in 1895, met with even stronger negative outcries from the Victorian public for its frank treatment of sex, and was often referred to as "Jude the Obscene". Heavily criticised for its apparent attack on the institution of marriage through the presentation of such concepts as [erotolepsy](#), the book caused further strain on Hardy's already difficult marriage because Emma Hardy was concerned that *Jude the Obscure* would be read as autobiographical. Some booksellers sold the novel in brown paper bags, and the [Bishop of Wakefield](#), [Walsham How](#), is reputed to have burnt his copy.<sup>[12]</sup> In his postscript of 1912, Hardy humorously referred to this incident as part of the career of the book: "After these [hostile] verdicts from the press its next misfortune was to be burnt by a bishop – probably in his despair at not being able to burn me".<sup>[13]</sup>

Despite this criticism, Hardy had become a celebrity in English literature by the 1900s, with several highly successful novels behind him. Even so, he felt disgust at the public reception of two of his greatest works and gave up writing fiction altogether. Other novels written by Hardy include [\*Two on a Tower\*](#), a romance story set in the world of [astronomy](#).

## Literary themes

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Hardy criticises certain social constraints that hindered the lives of those living in the 19th century. Considered a Victorian realist, Hardy examines the social constraints that are part of the Victorian status quo, suggesting these rules hinder the lives of all involved and ultimately lead to unhappiness.

Fellow British poet [Philip Larkin](#) in his essay "Wanted: Good Hardy Critic" describes Hardy's work:

"What is the intensely maturing experience of which Hardy's modern man is most sensible? In my view it is suffering, or sadness, and extended consideration of the centrality of suffering in Hardy's work should be the first duty of the true critic for which the work is still waiting . . . Any approach to his work, as to any writer's work, must seek first of all to determine what element is peculiarly his, which imaginative note he strikes most plangently, and to deny that in this case it is the sometimes gentle, sometimes ironic, sometimes bitter but always passive apprehension of suffering is, I think, wrong-headed."<sup>[14]</sup>

In *Two on a Tower*, Hardy seeks to take a stand against these rules and sets up a story of love that crosses the boundaries of class. The reader is forced to consider disposing of the conventions set up for love. Nineteenth-century society enforces these conventions, and societal pressure ensures conformity. Swithin St Cleeve's idealism pits him against contemporary social constraints. He is a self-willed individual set up against the coercive strictures of social rules and mores.

" In a novel structured around contrasts, the main opposition is between Swithin St Cleeve and Lady Viviette Constantine, who are presented as binary figures in a series of ways: aristocratic and lower class, youthful and mature, single and married, fair and dark, religious and agnostic...she [Lady Viviette Constantine] is also deeply conventional, absurdly wishing to conceal their marriage until Swithin has achieved social status through his scientific work, which gives rise to uncontrolled ironies and tragic-comic misunderstandings (Harvey 108). "

Hardy's characters often encounter crossroads, which are symbolic of a point of opportunity and transition. But the hand of fate is an important part of many of Hardy's plots. *Far From the Madding Crowd* tells a tale of lives that are constructed by chance. "Had Bathsheba not sent the valentine, had Fanny not missed her wedding, for example, the story would have taken an entirely different path."<sup>[15]</sup> Hardy's main characters often seem to be in the overwhelming and overpowering grip of fate.

## Poetry

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In 1898 Hardy published his first volume of poetry, [Wessex Poems](#), a collection of poems written over 30 years. Hardy claimed poetry as his first love, and after a great amount of negative criticism erupted from the publication of his novel [Jude The Obscure](#), Hardy decided to give up writing novels permanently and to focus his literary efforts on writing poetry. After giving up the novel form, Hardy continued to publish



poetry collections until his death in 1928. Although he did publish one last novel in 1897, that novel, [\*The Well-Beloved\*](#), had actually been written prior to *Jude the Obscure*.

Although his poems were not initially as well received by his contemporaries as his novels were, Hardy is now recognised as one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century. His verse had a profound influence on later writers, notably [Philip Larkin](#), who included many of Hardy's poems in the edition of the *Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse* that Larkin edited in 1973.

In a recent biography on Hardy, [Claire Tomalin](#) argues that Hardy became a truly great English poet after the death of his first wife, Emma, beginning with the elegies he wrote in her memory. Tomalin declares these poems among "the finest and strangest celebrations of the dead in English poetry."<sup>[16]</sup>

Most of Hardy's poems, such as "[Neutral Tones](#)" and "A Broken Appointment", deal with themes of disappointment in love and life, and mankind's long struggle against indifference to human suffering. In poems such as "Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave", Hardy employed twist endings in the last few lines or in the last stanza to convey irony. Some, like "[The Darkling Thrush](#)" and "An August Midnight", appear as poems about writing poetry, because the nature mentioned in them gives Hardy the inspiration to write. His compositions range in style from the three-volume epic closet drama [The Dynasts](#) to shorter poems such as "A Broken Appointment". A particularly strong theme in the *Wessex Poems* is the long shadow that the Napoleonic Wars cast over the nineteenth century, for example, in "The Sergeant's Song" and "Leipzig".

A few of Hardy's poems, such as "[The Blinded Bird](#)" (a melancholy polemic against the sport of [vinkenzetting](#)), display his love of the natural world and his firm stance against animal cruelty, exhibited in his [antivivisectionist](#) views and his membership in the [RSPCA](#).<sup>[17]</sup>

A number of notable composers, including [Gerald Finzi](#), [Benjamin Britten](#), and [Gustav Holst](#), have set poems by Hardy to music.

## *Religious beliefs*

Hardy's family was [Anglican](#), but not especially devout. He was baptised at the age of five weeks and attended church, where his father and uncle contributed to music. However, he did not attend the local [Church of England](#) school, instead being sent to Mr Last's school, three miles away. As a young adult, he befriended [Henry R. Bastow](#) (a [Plymouth Brethren](#) man), who also worked as a pupil architect, and who was preparing for [adult baptism](#) in the [Baptist Church](#). Hardy flirted with conversion, but decided against it.<sup>[18]</sup> Bastow went to Australia and maintained a long correspondence with Hardy, but eventually Hardy tired of these exchanges and the correspondence ceased. This concluded Hardy's links with the Baptists.

The irony and struggles of life and a curious mind led him to question the traditional Christian view of God:

- “ The Christian god – the external personality – has been replaced by the intelligence of the First Cause...the replacement of the old concept of God as all-powerful by a new concept of universal consciousness. The 'tribal god, man-shaped, fiery-faced and tyrannous' is replaced by the 'unconscious will of the Universe' which progressively grows aware of itself and 'ultimately, it is to be hoped, sympathetic'.<sup>[19]</sup> ”

Hardy's religious life seems to have mixed agnosticism, [deism](#), and [spiritism](#). Once, when asked in correspondence by a clergyman about the question of reconciling the horrors of pain with the goodness of a loving God, Hardy replied,

- “ Mr. Hardy regrets that he is unable to offer any hypothesis which would reconcile the existence of such evils as [Dr. Grosart](#) describes with the idea of omnipotent goodness. Perhaps Dr. Grosart might be helped to a provisional view of the universe by the recently published Life of Darwin and the works of [Herbert Spencer](#) and other agnostics.<sup>[20]</sup> ”

Nevertheless, Hardy frequently conceived of and wrote about supernatural forces that control the universe, more through indifference or caprice than any firm will. Also, Hardy showed in his writing some degree of fascination with ghosts and spirits.<sup>[20]</sup> Despite these sentiments, Hardy retained a strong emotional attachment to the Christian liturgy and church rituals, particularly as manifested in rural communities, that had been such a formative influence in his early years, and Biblical references can be found woven throughout many of Hardy's novels.

Hardy's friends during his apprenticeship to John Hicks included [Horace Moule](#) (one of the eight sons of [Henry Moule](#)), and the poet [William Barnes](#), both ministers of religion. Moule remained a close friend of Hardy's for the rest of his life, and introduced him to new scientific findings that cast doubt on literal interpretations of the Bible, such as those of [Gideon Mantell](#). Moule gave Hardy a copy of Mantell's book *The Wonders of Geology* (1848) in 1858, and Adelene Buckland has suggested that there are "compelling similarities" between the "cliffhanger" section from *A Pair of Blue Eyes* and Mantell's geological descriptions. It has also been suggested that the character of Henry Knight in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* was based on Horace Moule.

## *Influence*

[D. H. Lawrence](#)'s *Study of Thomas Hardy* (1936), indicates the importance of Hardy for him, even though this work is a platform for Lawrence's own developing philosophy rather than a more standard literary study. The influence of Hardy's treatment of character, and Lawrence's own response to the central [metaphysic](#) behind many of Hardy's novels, helped significantly in the development of [The Rainbow](#) (1915) and [Women in Love](#) (1920). A

contemporary of Lawrence, [John Cowper Powys](#)'s first novel, *Wood and Stone* (1915) was "Dedicated with devoted admiration to the greatest poet and novelist of our age Thomas Hardy". Hardy was clearly the starting point for the character of the novelist Edward Driffield in [W Somerset Maugham](#)'s novel [Cakes and Ale](#) (1930). Thomas Hardy's works also feature prominently in the American playwright [Christopher Durang](#)'s *The Marriage of Bette and Boo* (1985), in which a graduate thesis analysing [Tess of the d'Urbervilles](#) is interspersed with analysis of Matt's family's neuroses.

## Works

### Prose

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Hardy divided his novels and collected short stories into three classes:

#### Novels of Character and Environment

- [The Poor Man and the Lady](#) (1867, unpublished and lost)
- [Under the Greenwood Tree](#) (1872)
- [Far from the Madding Crowd](#) (1874)
- [The Return of the Native](#) (1878)
- [The Mayor of Casterbridge](#) (1886)
- [The Woodlanders](#) (1887)
- [Wessex Tales](#) (1888, a collection of short stories)
- [Tess of the d'Urbervilles](#) (1891)
- [Life's Little Ironies](#) (1894, a collection of short stories)
- [Jude the Obscure](#) (1895)

#### Romances and Fantasies

- [A Pair of Blue Eyes](#) (1873)
- [The Trumpet-Major](#) (1880)
- [Two on a Tower](#) (1882)
- [A Group of Noble Dames](#) (1891, a collection of short stories)
- [The Well-Beloved](#) (1897) (first published as a serial from 1892)

#### Novels of Ingenuity

- [Desperate Remedies](#) (1871)
- [The Hand of Ethelberta](#) (1876)
- [A Laodicean](#) (1881)

Hardy also produced a number of minor tales; one story, *The Spectre of the Real* (1894) was written in collaboration with [Florence Henniker](#).<sup>[23]</sup> An additional short-story collection, beyond the ones mentioned above, is *A Changed Man and Other Tales* (1913). His works have been collected as the

24-volume Wessex Edition (1912–13) and the 37-volume Mellstock Edition (1919–20). His largely self-written biography appears under his second wife's name in two volumes from 1928–30, as *The Early Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840–91* and *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1892–1928*, now published in a critical one-volume edition as *The Life and Work of Thomas Hardy*, edited by Michael Millgate (1984).

### Short stories (with date of first publication)

"How I Built Myself A House" (1865)	"The Winters and the Palmleys" (1891)
"Destiny and a Blue Cloak" (1874)	"For Conscience' Sake" (1891)
"The Thieves Who Couldn't Stop Sneezing" (1877)	"Incident in Mr. Crookhill's Life"(1891)
"The Duchess of Hamptonsire" (1878)	"The Doctor's Legend" (1891)
"The Distracted Preacher" (1879)	"Andrey Satchel and the Parson and Clerk" (1891)
"Fellow-Townsmen" (1880)	"The History of the Hardcomes" (1891)
"The Honourable Laura" (1881)	"Netty Sargent's Copyhold" (1891)
"What The Shepherd Saw" (1881)	"On The Western Circuit" (1891)
"A Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four" (1882)	"A Few Crusted Characters: Introduction" (1891)
" <a href="#">The Three Strangers</a> " (1883)	"The Superstitious Man's Story" (1891)
"The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid" (1883)	"Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver" (1891)
"Interlopers at the Knap" (1884)	"To Please His Wife" (1891)
" <a href="#">A Mere Interlude</a> " (1885)	"The Son's Veto" (1891)
"A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork" (1885)	"Old Andrey's Experience as a Musician" (1891)
" <a href="#">Alicia's Diary</a> " (1887)	" <a href="#">Our Exploits At West Poley</a> " (1892–93)
"The Waiting Supper" (1887–88)	"Master John Horseleigh, Knight" (1893)
"The Withered Arm" (1888)	"The Fiddler of the Reels" (1893)
" <a href="#">A Tragedy of Two Ambitions</a> " (1888)	"An Imaginative Woman" (1894)
"The First Countess of Wessex" (1889)	"The Spectre of the Real" (1894)
"Anna, Lady Baxby" (1890)	"A Committee-Man of 'The Terror'" (1896)
"The Lady Icenway" (1890)	"The Duke's Reappearance" (1896)
"Lady Mottisfont" (1890)	"The Grave by the Handpost" (1897)
"The Lady Penelope" (1890)	"A Changed Man" (1900)
"The Marchioness of Stonehenge" (1890)	"Enter a Dragoon" (1900)
"Squire Petrick's Lady" (1890)	"Blue Jimmy: The Horse Stealer" (1911)
" <a href="#">Barbara of the House of Grebe</a> " (1890)	"Old Mrs. Chundle" (1929)
"The Melancholy Hussar of The German Legion" (1890)	" <a href="#">The Unconquerable</a> "(1992)
"Absent-Mindedness in a Parish Choir" (1891)	

### Poetry collections

- [The Photograph](#) (1890)
- [Wessex Poems and Other Verses](#) (1898)
- [Poems of the Past and the Present](#) (1901)
- [The Man He Killed](#) (1902)

- [Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses](#) (1909)
- [The Voice](#) (1912)
- [Satires of Circumstance](#) (1914)
- [Moments of Vision](#) (1917)
- [Collected Poems](#) (1919)
- [Late Lyrics and Earlier with Many Other Verses](#) (1923)
- [Human Shows, Far Phantasies, Songs and Trifles](#) (1925)
- [Winter Words in Various Moods and Metres](#) (1928)
- *The Complete Poems* (Macmillan, 1976)
- *Selected Poems* (Edited by Harry Thomas, Penguin, 1993)
- *Hardy: Poems* (Everyman's Library Pocket Poets, 1995)
- *Thomas Hardy: Selected Poetry and Nonfictional Prose* (St. Martin's Press, 1996)
- *Selected Poems* (Edited by Robert Mezey, Penguin, 1998)
- *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems* (Edited by James Gibson, Palgrave, 2001)

## Drama

- *The Dynasts* (verse drama)
  - [The Dynasts, Part 1](#) (1904)
  - [The Dynasts, Part 2](#) (1906)
  - [The Dynasts, Part 3](#) (1908)
- *The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall at [Tintagel](#) in Lyonesse* (1923) (one-act play)

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## [7] Thomas Hardy (1840 - 1928)

[Resource: <http://authorscalendar.info/thardy.htm>]

English poet and regional novelist, who depicted the county "Wessex," named after the ancient kingdom of Alfred the Great. Hardy's career as writer spanned over fifty years. His earliest books appeared when Anthony Trollope (1815-82) wrote his Palliser series, and he published poetry in the decade of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Hardy's work reflected his stoical pessimism and sense of tragedy in human life.

**"Critics can never be made to understand that that the failure may be greater than the success... To have the strength to roll a stone weighting a hundredweight to the top of a mountain is a success, and to have the strength to roll a stone of then hundredweight only halfway up that mount is a failure. But the latter is two or three times as strong a deed." (Hardy in his diary, 1907)**



Thomas Hardy's own life wasn't similar to his stories. He was born in the village of Higher Bockhampton, on the edge of Puddletown Heath. His father was a master mason and building contractor. With a certain pride the author once said, that although his ancestors never rose above the level of a master-mason, they never sunk below it. Hardy's mother, whose tastes included Latin poets and French romances, provided for his education. After schooling in Dorchester, Hardy was apprenticed to an architect.

While working in an office, which specialized in restoration of churches, Hardy supervised the removal of the remains of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin when a railway was run through part of the churchyard of St Pancras Old Church. Some of the displaced gravestones he set around an ash tree that was later named after him. In 1874 Hardy married Emma Lavinia Gifford, for whom he wrote 40 years later, after her death, a group of poems known as *Veteris Vestigia Flammae* (Vestiges of an Old Flame).

At the age of 22 Hardy moved to London and started to write poems, which idealized the rural life. He was an assistant in the architectural firm of Arthur Blomfield, visited art galleries, attended evening classes in French at King's College, enjoyed Shakespeare and opera, and read works of Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and John Stuart Mills, whose positivism influenced him deeply. In 1867 Hardy left London for the family home in Dorset, and resumed work briefly with Hicks in Dorchester. During this period of his life Hardy entered into a temporary engagement with Tryphena Sparks, a pretty and lively sixteen-year-old relative. Hardy continued his architectural career, but encouraged by Emma Lavinia Gifford, he started to consider literature as his "true vocation."

Hardy did not first find public for his poetry and the novelist George Meredith advised Hardy to write a novel. *The Poor Man and the Lady*, written in 1867, was rejected by many publishers and Hardy destroyed the manuscript. His first book that gained notice was *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874). After its success Hardy was convinced that he could earn his living by his pen. Devoting himself entirely to writing, Hardy produced a series of novels.

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) came into conflict with Victorian morality. It explored the dark side of his family connections in Berkshire. In the story the poor villager girl Tess Durbeyfield is seduced by the wealthy Alec D'Urberville. She becomes pregnant but the child dies in infancy. Tess finds work as a dairymaid on a farm and falls in love with Angel Clare, a clergyman's son, who marries her. When Tess tells Angel about her past, he hypocritically deserts her. Tess becomes Alec's mistress. Angel returns from Brazil, repenting his

harshness, but finds her living with Alec. Tess kills Alec in desperation, she is arrested and hanged.

Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895) aroused even more controversy. The story dramatized the conflict between carnal and spiritual life, tracing Jude Fawley's life from his boyhood to his early death. Jude marries Arabella, but deserts her. He falls in love with his cousin, hypersensitive Sue Bridehead, who marries the decaying schoolmaster, Phillotson, in a masochist fit. Jude and Sue obtain divorces, but their life together deteriorates under the pressure of poverty and social disapproval. The eldest son of Jude and Arabella, a grotesque boy nicknamed 'Father Time,' kills their children and himself. Broken by the loss, Sue goes back to Phillotson, and Jude returns to Arabella. Soon thereafter Jude dies, and his last words are: "Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul?"

In 1896, disturbed by the public uproar over the unconventional subjects of two of his greatest novels, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*, Hardy announced that he would never write fiction again. A bishop solemnly burnt the book, "probably in his despair at not being able to burn me," Hardy noted. Hardy's marriage had also suffered from the public outrage - critics on both sides of the Atlantic abused the author as degenerate and called the work itself disgusting. In April, 1912, Hardy wrote:

**"Then somebody discovered that Jude was a moral work - austere in its treatment of a difficult subject - as if the writer had not all the time said in the Preface that it was meant to be so. Thereupon many uncursed me, and the matter ended, the only effect of it on human conduct that I could discover being its effect on myself - the experience completely curing me of the further interest in novel-writing."**

By 1885 the Hardys had settled near Dorchester at Max Gate, a house designed by the author and built by his brother, Henry. With the exceptions of seasonal stays in London and occasional excursions abroad, his Bockhampton home, "a modest house, providing neither more nor less than the accommodation ... needed" (as Michael Millgate describes it in his biography of the author) was his home for the rest of his life.

After giving up the novel, Hardy brought out a first group of Wessex poems, some of which had been composed 30 years before. During the remainder of his life, Hardy continued to publish several collections of poems. "Hardy, in fact, was the ideal poet of a generation. He was the most passionate and the most learned of them all. He had the luck, singular in poets, of being able to achieve a competence

other than by poetry and then devote the ending years of his life to his beloved verses." (Ford Madox Ford in *The March of Literature*, 1938) Hardy's gigantic panorama of the Napoleonic Wars, *The Dynasts*, composed between 1903 and 1908, was mostly in blank verse.

Hardy succeeded on the death of his friend George Meredith to the presidency of the Society of Authors in 1909. King George V conferred on him the Order of Merit and he received in 1912 the gold medal of the Royal Society of Literature.

Hardy kept to his childless marriage with Emma Gifford although it was unhappy and he had - or he imagined he had - affairs with other women passing briefly through his life. Emma Hardy died in 1912. At that time she had already withdrawn from her husband, and spent much of her time in a small room in the attic. Filled with remorse, Hardy had her body placed in a coffin at the foot of his bed, where it remained until the funeral. In 1914 Hardy married his secretary, Florence Emily Dugdale, a woman in her 30's, almost 40 years younger than he. Their relationship had started from a fan letter she sent him. Nevertheless, the death of Emma made Hardy a great poet. He recreated their love in his poems, without hiding the truth about their estrangement: "Woman much missed, how you call to me, call to me, / Saying that now you are not as you were / When you had changed from the one who was all to me, / But as at first, when our day was fair."

From 1920 through 1927 Hardy concentrated on his autobiography, which was disguised as the work of Florence Hardy. It appeared in two volumes (1928 and 1930). Despite his country upbringing and reputation as a rural writer, Hardy reminds the reader that he has spent a great deal of time in the capital and was familiar with modernism. On the other hand, he gives little information on his methods as a writer. There is no hint of extra-marital affairs and he never criticises his first wife. Hardy's last book was *Human Shows Far Phantasies Songs and Trifles* (1925). *Winter Words in Various Moods and Metres* appeared posthumously in 1928.

Hardy died in Dorchester, Dorset, on January 11, 1928. Eva Dugdale washed his body and prepared it for burial. Hardy's ashes were cremated in Dorchester and buried with impressive ceremonies in the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. According to a literary anecdote his heart was to be buried in Stinsford, his birthplace. All went according to plan, until a cat belonging to the poet's sister snatched the heart off the kitchen, where it was temporarily kept in a biscuit tin, and disappeared into the woods with it.

Hardy bravely challenged many of the sexual and religious conventions of the Victorian age. The center of his novels was the rather desolate and history-

freighted countryside around Dorchester. In the early 1860s, after the appearance Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), Hardy's faith was still unshaken, but he soon adopted the mechanical-determinist view of universe's cruelty, reflected in the inevitably tragic and self-destructive fates of his characters.

In his poems Hardy depicted rural life without sentimentality - his mood was often stoically hopeless. "Though he was a modern, even a revolutionary writer in his time, most of us read him now as a lyrical pastoralist. It may be a sign of the times that some of us take his books to bed, as if even his pessimistic vision was one that enabled us to sleep soundly." (Anatole Broyard in *New York Times*, May 12, 1982) In spite of his criticism of religious hypocrisy, he had a deep understanding of the religious life of men, as in the poem 'God's Funeral' (1908-1910), in which imagined himself watching a "strange mystic form" being carried to Its, or His, grave. Affected by sorrow of the mourners he confesses: "I could not buoy their faith: and yet / Many I had known: with all I sympathized."

**For further reading:** *Thomas Hardy* by Claire Tomalin (2007); *The Life of Thomas Hardy: A Critical Biography* by P.D.L. Turner (1998); *Thomas Hardy in Our Time* by R.W. Langbaum (1995); *Hardy and the Erotic* by T.R. Wright (1989); *Thomas Hardy* by M. Millgate (1982); *The Older Hardy* by R. Gittings (1980); *An Essay on Thomas Hardy* by J. Bayley (1978); *The Final Years of Thomas Hardy, 1912-1928* by H. Orel (1976); *Young Thomas Hardy* by R. Gittings (1975); *Thomas Hardy: A Critical Biography* by J.I.M. Stewart (1971); *The Poetry of Thomas Hardy: A Handbook and Commentary* by J.O. Bailey (1970); *Thomas Hardy* by I. Howe (1967); *Thomas Hardy: A Critical Biography* by E. Hardy (1954); *Thomas Hardy* by A.J. Guerard (1949); *Hardy of Wessex: His Life and Career* by C.J. Weber (1940) - **See also:** [Wladyslaw Reymont, C.D. Lewis](#) (*The Lyrical Poetry of Thomas Hardy*, 1953), [Michael Innes](#), [Francois La Rochefoucauld](#).

### Selected works:

- Desperate Remedies, 1871
- Under the Greenwood Tree, 1872
  - films: 1929, dir. by Harry Lachman; tv drama 2005, dir. by Nicholas Laughland, starring Keely Hawes, James Murray, Terry Mortimer, Richard Leaf
- A Pair of Blue Eyes, 1973
  - Sininen silmäpari (suom. J.A. Hollo, 1924)
- Far from the Madding Crowd, 1874
  - films: 1915, dir. by Laurence Trimble; 1967, dir. by John Schlesinger, starring Julie Christie, Peter Finch, Terence Stamp, Alan Bates, Prunella Ransome; TV drama 1998, dir. by Nicholas Renton; 2015, dir. by Thomas Vinterberg, screenplay by David Nicholls, starring Carey Mulligan, Matthias Schoenaerts, Michael Sheen |
- The Hand of Ethelberta, 1876
- The Return of the Native, 1878
  - Paluu nummelle (suom. Harry Forsblom, 1968)
  - films: TV drama 1994, dir. by Jack Gold, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Clive Owen, Ray Stevenson, Steven Mackintosh; 2010, dir. Ben Westbrook, starring Phil Amico, Manuel de la Portilla and Matt Fuhman
- The Trumpet-Major, 1880

- A Laodicean, 1881
- Two on a Tower, 1882
- The Mayor of Casterbridge, 1886
  - Pormestarin tarina (suom. Kristiina Kivivuori, 1955)
  - films: 1921, dir. by Sidney Morgan; The Claim, 2000, dir. by Michael Winterbottom, starring Peter Mullan, Nastassja Kinski, Sarah Polley, Wes Bentley; TV drama 2003, dir. by David Thacker, starring Ciarán Hinds, Juliet Aubrey and Jodhi May
- Wessex Tales, 1888
  - film: BBC TV series 1973: The Withered Arm, dir. Desmond Davis; Fellow-Townsmen, dir. Barry Davis; A Tragedy of Two Ambitions, adapted by Dennis Potter, dir. Michael Tuchner; An Imaginative Woman, dir. Gavin Millar; The Melancholy Hussar, dir. Mike Newell; Barbara of the House of Grebe, dir. David Hugh Jones
- The Woodlanders, 1887
  - films: TV series, 1970, starring Felicity Kendal, David Burke and Annette Robertson; 1997, dir. by Phil Agland, starring Emily Woof, Rufus Sewell, Cal Macaninch, Tony Haygarth
- The Photograph, 1890
- The Melancholy Hussar of The German Legion, 1890 (short story, in the Wessex Tales)
  - film: The Scarlet Tunic, 1998, dir. Stuart St. Paul, starring Jean-Marc Barr, Emma Fielding, Simon Callow, Jack Shepherd, John Sessions, Lynda Bellingham
- A Group of Noble Dames, 1891
  - Ylhäisiä naisia (suom. J.A. Hollo, 1922)
- Tess of the d'Urbervilles, 1891
  - Tessin tarina: romaani (suom. Uuno Helve, 1909)
  - films: 1913, dir. by J. Searle Dawley; 1924, dir. by Marshall Neilan, starring Blanche Sweet, Conrad Nagel, Stuart Holmes, George Fawcett; Man Ki Jeet, 1944, dir. by Wahid-ud-din Zia-ud-din Ahmed; Dulham Ek Raat Ki, 1967, dir. by D.D. Kashyap; Cheongchun mujeong, 1970, dir. by Soo-young Kim; Tess, 1979, dir. by Roman Polanski, starring Nastassja Kinski, Peter Firth and Leigh Lawson. **"The 18th-century world Polanski presents is so believable that we sense the people we see really do live in those farmhouses, shacks, country estates, and townhouses. There is wonderful period detail, and few films have been more exquisitely photographed (Geoffrey Unsworth and Ghislain Cloquet share the credit). A lovely film."** (Danny Perry in *Guide for the Film Fanatic*, 1986); TV movie 1998, dir. by Ian Sharp, starring Justine Waddell, Jason Flemyng and Oliver Milburn; TV mini-series, starring Gemma Arterton, Eddie Redmayne and Ruth Jones; Trishna, 2011, dir. Michael Winterbottom, starring Freida Pinto, Riz Ahmed and Anurag Kashyap
- Our Exploits at West Poley, 1892-93 (in The Household)
  - Luolan salaisuus (suom. T. A. Engström, 1973)
  - films: The Secret Cave, dir. John Durst, starring David Coote, Nick Edmett, Susan Ford, Lewis Gedge, Trevor Hill, Johnny Morris; Exploits at West Poley, TV film 1985, dir. Diarmuid Lawrence, starring Anthony Bale, Brenda Fricker and Charlie Condou
- Life's Little Ironies, 1894
- Jude the Obscure, 1895
  - films: Jude, 1996, dir. by Michael Winterbottom, starring Christopher Eccleston, Kate Winslet, Liam Cunningham, Rachel Griffiths, June Whitfield; TV mini-series 1971, dir. by Hugh David, starring John Franklyn-Robbins, Daphne Heard, Alex Marshall, Robert Powell, Fiona Walker
- The Well-Beloved, 1897
- Wessex Poems and Other Verses, 1898
- Poems of the Past and Present, 1901
- The Man He Killed, 1902
- The Dynasts, 1903-08
- Time's Laughingstocks and Other Verses, 1909
- The Voice, 1912
- A Changed Man and Other Tales, 1913
- Satires of Circumstance, 1914
- Moments of Vision, 1917
- The Play of St. George, 1921

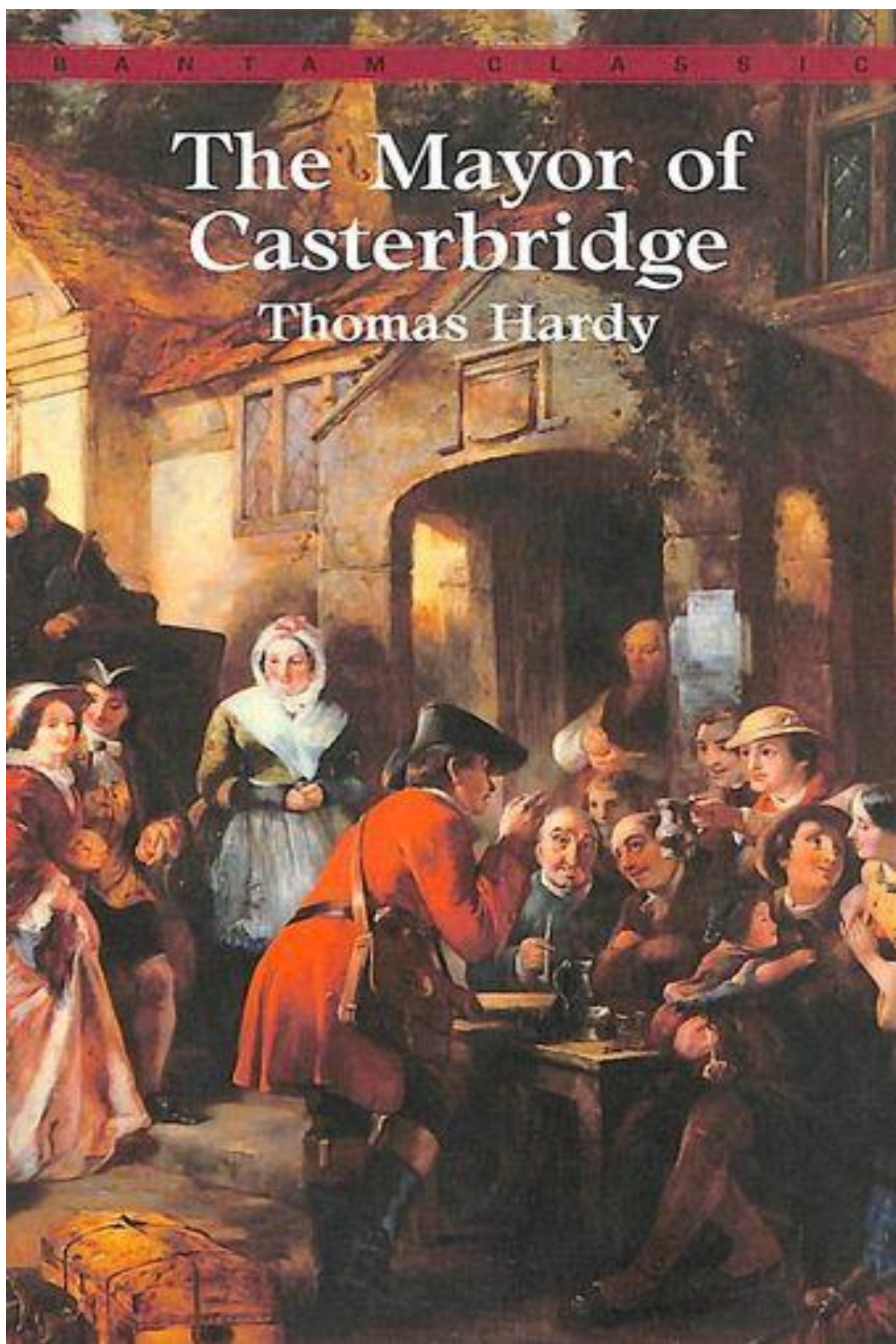


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B A N T A M C L A S S I C

# The Mayor of Casterbridge

Thomas Hardy



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*The Mayor of Casterbridge*, originally entitled *The Life and Death of the Mayor of Casterbridge: A Story of a Man of Character*, was first published serially in a London periodical in 1886. The first publication in book form was later that year. Thomas Hardy was an established author at the time and had published nine previous novels (a first, unpublished novel has been lost), but *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is considered his first masterpiece; some regard it as his greatest tragic novel.

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* is, from beginning to end, the story of Michael Henchard, a skilled farm laborer who, in a drunken rage, sells his young wife, along with their infant child, to a passing sailor. Most of the novel takes place eighteen to twenty years after this event. When the sailor is reported lost at sea, the cast-off wife and now-grown daughter set out to find Michael, who has become an affluent businessman and the mayor of Casterbridge. Michael's success is temporary, though, as circumstances and his own weaknesses of character combine to bring about his downfall in spite of his attempts to right the wrong, he committed years before.

## Summary

In a fit of drunken irritation, Michael Henchard, a young, unemployed hay-trusser, sells his wife Susan and his infant daughter Elizabeth-Jane to a sailor during a fair in the village of Weydon-Priors. Eighteen years later, Susan and Elizabeth-Jane return to seek him out but are told by the "furmity woman," the old hag whose concoction had made Henchard drunk at the fair, that he has moved to the distant town of Casterbridge. The sailor has been reported lost at sea.

Susan and Elizabeth-Jane, the latter innocent of the shameful sale eighteen years before, reach Casterbridge, where they discover that Henchard has become the mayor and one of the wealthiest businessmen in the area. Henchard, out of a sense of guilt, courts Susan in a respectable manner and soon after remarries her, hoping that one day he will be able to acknowledge Elizabeth-Jane as his daughter. Concurrently with Susan's return, Henchard hires Donald Farfrae, a young Scotsman, as his business manager. After a short while, Susan dies, and Henchard learns that his own daughter

had died many years earlier and that Elizabeth-Jane is really the illegitimate daughter of Newson, the sailor, Susan's second "husband."

Lucetta Templeman, a young woman from Jersey with whom Henchard has had a romantic involvement, comes to Casterbridge with the intention of marrying Henchard. She meets Farfrae, however, and the two are deeply attracted to each other. Henchard, disturbed by Farfrae's prestige in the town, has dismissed him, and Farfrae sets up his own rival business. Shortly after, Farfrae and Lucetta are married.

Henchard's fortunes continue their decline while Farfrae's advance. When Henchard's successor as mayor dies suddenly, Farfrae becomes mayor. Henchard's ruin is almost completed when the "furmity woman" is arrested as a vagrant in Casterbridge and reveals the transaction two decades earlier when Henchard sold his wife. Then, by a combination of bad luck and mismanagement, Henchard goes bankrupt and is forced to make his living as an employee of Farfrae's.

Lucetta, now at the height of her fortunes, has staked everything on keeping her past relationship with Henchard a secret. Her old love letters to him, however, find their way into the hands of Henchard's vengeful ex-employee, Jopp, who reveals them to the worst element in the town. They organize a "skimmity-ride," in which Henchard and Lucetta are paraded in effigy through the streets. The shock of the scandal kills Lucetta.

Now an almost broken man, Henchard moves to the poorest quarters, where his life is made tolerable only by Elizabeth-Jane's kindness and concern. Even his comfort in her affection is threatened, however, when Newson, the sailor, returns in search of his daughter. Henchard's lie to Newson that Elizabeth-Jane has died is eventually discovered, and Elizabeth-Jane, his last source of comfort, turns against him.

Farfrae, after a period as a widower, renews his interest in Elizabeth-Jane. They are married and Henchard, when he comes to deliver a wedding gift, finds Newson enjoying his position as the bride's father. Heartbroken, Henchard leaves and shortly afterwards dies in an abandoned hut, attended only by the humblest and simplest of his former workmen. The novel closes when Farfrae and Elizabeth-Jane find the place where he has died and read his terrible will of complete renunciation.

## Themes

### (a) The Importance of Character

As a "Story of a Man of Character," *The Mayor of Casterbridge* focuses on how its protagonist's qualities enable him to endure. One tends to think of character, especially in terms of a "Man of Character," as the product of such values as honor and moral righteousness. Certainly Michael Henchard does not fit neatly into such categories. Throughout the novel, his volatile temper forces him into ruthless competition with Farfrae that strips him of his pride and property, while his insecurities lead him to deceive the one person he learns to



truly care about, Elizabeth-Jane. Henchard dies an unremarkable death, slinking off to a humble cottage in the woods, and he stipulates in his will that no one mourn or remember him. There will be no statues in the Casterbridge square, as one might imagine, to mark his life and work. Yet Hardy insists that his hero is a worthy man. Henchard's worth, then—that which makes him a "Man of Character"—lies in his determination to suffer and in his ability to endure great pain. He shoulders the burden of his own mistakes as he sells his family, mismanages his business, and bears the storm of an unlucky fate, especially when the firmity-woman confesses and Newson reappears. In a world that seems guided by the "scheme[s] of some sinister intelligence bent on punishing" human beings, there can be no more honorable and more righteous characteristic than Henchard's brand of "defiant endurance."

### **(b) The Value of a Good Name**

The value of a good name is abundantly clear within the first few chapters of the novel: as Henchard wakes to find that the sale of his wife was not a dream or a drunken hallucination, his first concern is to remember whether he divulged his name to anyone during the course of the previous evening. All the while, Susan warns Elizabeth-Jane of the need for discretion at the Three Mariners Inn—their respectability (and, more important, that of the mayor) could be jeopardized if anyone discovered that Henchard's family performed chores as payment for lodging.

The importance of a solid reputation and character is rather obvious given Henchard's situation, for Henchard has little else besides his name. He arrives in Casterbridge with nothing more than the implements of the hay-trusser's trade, and though we never learn the circumstances of his ascent to civic leader, such a climb presumably depends upon the worth of one's name. Throughout the course of the novel, Henchard attempts to earn, or to believe that he has earned, his position. He is, however, plagued by a conviction of his own worthlessness, and he places himself in situations that can only result in failure. For instance, he indulges in petty jealousy of Farfrae, which leads to a drawn-out competition in which Henchard loses his position as mayor, his business, and the women he loves. More crucial, Henchard's actions result in the loss of his name and his reputation as a worthy and honorable citizen. Once he has lost these essentials, he follows the same course toward death as Lucetta, whose demise is seemingly precipitated by the irretrievable loss of respectability brought about by the "skimmy-ride."

### **(c) The Indelibility of the Past**

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* is a novel haunted by the past. Henchard's fateful decision to sell his wife and child at Weydon-Priors continues to shape his life eighteen years later, while the town itself rests upon its former incarnation: every farmer who tills a field turns up the remains of long-dead Roman soldiers.



The Ring, the ancient Roman amphitheater that dominates Casterbridge and provides a forum for the secret meetings of its citizens, stands as a potent symbol of the indeli-bility of a past that cannot be escaped. The terrible events that once occurred here as entertainment for the citizens of Casterbridge have, in a certain sense, determined the town's present state. The brutality of public executions has given way to the miseries of thwarted lovers.

Henchard's past proves no less indomitable. Indeed, he spends the entirety of the novel attempting to right the wrongs of long ago. He succeeds only in making more grievous mistakes, but he never fails to acknowledge that the past cannot be buried or denied. Only Lucetta is guilty of such folly. She dismisses her history with Henchard and the promises that she made to him in order to pursue Farfrae, a decision for which she pays with her reputation and, eventually, her life.

## Characters

### **Michael Henchard**

As the novel's protagonist, Henchard is the "Man of Character" to whom the subtitle of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* alludes. When the novel opens, Henchard is a disconsolate twenty-one-year-old hay-trusser who, in a drunken rage, sells his wife and daughter at a county fair. Eighteen years later, Henchard has risen to become the mayor and the most accomplished corn merchant in the town of Casterbridge. Although he tries to atone for his youthful crimes, he focuses too much on his past misdeeds and enters a downward trajectory that embroils him in a fierce competition with a popular Scotchman named Donald Farfrae.

### **Elizabeth-Jane Newson**

The daughter of Susan and Newson. Elizabeth-Jane bears the same name as the child born to Susan and Henchard, who actually dies shortly after Henchard sells Susan and his daughter. Over the course of the novel, the independent and self-possessed Elizabeth-Jane transforms herself from an unrefined country girl into a cultured young lady. Though she experiences much hardship over the course of the novel, she maintains an even temperament throughout.

### **Donald Farfrae**

The Scotchman who arrives in Casterbridge at the same time as Susan Henchard and Elizabeth-Jane. Farfrae's business efficiency, good humor, and polish make him extremely popular among the town's citizens. These same qualities, however, eventually make him Henchard's rival. Despite this tension in their friendship, Farfrae remains fair-minded, patient, and even kind in his dealings with the ruined Henchard.

### **Lucetta Templeman**

A woman whom Henchard meets, courts, and proposes to marry. Lucetta bucks convention, choosing to love whom she pleases when she pleases. Like Henchard, she is guided by her emotions, and her reactions are thus not always rational.

### **Susan Henchard**

A meek, unassuming woman married to Michael Henchard when the novel opens. Overly concerned with propriety, Susan attempts to keep secrets about Henchard's and Elizabeth-Jane's identities in order to give the appearance of perfect family harmony.

### **Newsom**

The sailor who buys Susan and Elizabeth-Jane from Henchard. Newsom is absent for most of the novel; his eventual reappearance contributes to the feeling that Henchard is besieged by fate.

### **Joshua Jopp**

The man Henchard intends to hire as his assistant before meeting Farfrae.

### **Abel Whittle**

One of the workers in Henchard's hay-yard. Whittle is also the source of the first disagreement between Henchard and Farfrae, as Farfrae thinks that Henchard is too rough with Whittle when he is constantly late for work.

## **Analysis of Some Characters**

### **Michael Henchard**

Michael Henchard is a strong man with great energy. He has fine points in his character, but they are contrasted sharply with other less admirable qualities. Thus, he will try to make up for what he has done to Susan, but he will still remain rash and impetuous in his dealings with people. He is honest and upright, so much so that he insists on binding one of his arms when fighting Farfrae, and he refuses to hide one cent of his property from the administrators of his bankrupt business. Even the administrators praise his honesty. He is generous and kind to Abel Whittle's mother. Donald Farfrae owes much to Henchard's giving him a start. These are but a few instances of Henchard's honesty and generosity.

But the darker side of Henchard's character is even more evident. He has no compunction in punishing Abel Whittle too severely for lateness, and the quality of his kindness and friendship to Farfrae becomes overbearing and possessive. His pride is noteworthy, but often it grows into hideous egoism. Thus, his pride refuses to let him reveal his past to Elizabeth-Jane, and at the end of the novel he cannot bring himself to tell her the true account of his lie to Newsom. Again, it is his pride which prompts the rivalry and jealousy he feels toward Donald Farfrae. But, despite obvious flaws in his character, Henchard has the ability to love deeply. He achieves the strength to take silently upon himself the suffering

caused by his own sins, and it is this will to endure the wrath of the heavens that gives him great stature.

### Susan

Hardy purposely drew Susan as a vague character. Before the end of the third chapter, it becomes clear that she has suffered an outrage not to be endured. If her character were outlined more definitely, Hardy would be running the risk of displacing the focus from Henchard to Susan and give her a more assertive part in the plot. Thus it is unnecessary to speculate on what her life would have been like if Henchard had not auctioned her off. It is clear, however, that her simple nature lends her an innocence and trust that almost surpass the bounds of credibility. She believes pessimistically that the events of her life have been structured by an unkind fate, and she does not look to mankind for assistance.

### Elizabeth-Jane

Elizabeth-Jane, tempered in poverty and the loss of her father, Newson, and her mother, resigns herself to study and self-betterment. Her beauty begins to flower with the more wholesome diet and relatively relaxed atmosphere of living in a wealthy home. She senses something improper in Susan and Henchard's past relationship, and almost unconsciously she strives to emulate a conservative, formal, correct social relationship with others. However, despite the melancholy aura which surrounds her, Elizabeth-Jane is able to love deeply and sincerely. In fact, she has observed so much of life around her with such an understanding eye that she cannot remain bitter in any way. Even when she renounces Henchard for lying to her about Newson — an understandable action considering her deep love for Newson — she cannot long remain bitter and sets out to find him. Her tribute to Henchard's memory is in honoring his last wishes since she knows that he was a man of indomitable will. She dedicates the rest of her life to kindness, humanity, and learning, and her soul becomes more beautiful as she advances through life.

### Donald Farfrae

Donald Farfrae is a young Scotsman, leaner and frailer than Henchard. However, what he lacks in physical strength, he more than makes up for in charm, wit, and good humor. Donald has a mind for mechanical things and business. But, whereas Henchard has no penchant for creative endeavors, Donald has cultivated a pleasant singing voice and knows how to give an entertainment that will appeal to others. The most pronounced contrast between Henchard's and Donald's characters is that Donald cannot truly harbor a grudge or wish to be vengeful. He

is prudent in his philosophy and social outlook, and one feels that he and Elizabeth-Jane are manifestly suited to each other.

### Lucetta Templeman

In Victorian times, Lucetta would have been considered a reckless libertine. Today we would call her a rather flighty, flirtatious, indiscreet young lady. There is not much depth to Lucetta's character once we place her beside Elizabeth-Jane. She writes compromising letters to Henchard and takes her married life in her hands when she meets him secretly at the Ring. But she does not think of these things until it is too late. She is preoccupied with clothing, comfort, fashions, and sophisticated light banter. She is quick to deny Donald's former connection with Henchard during the disturbance of the royal visitor, and her rather snobbish attitude turns Jopp into a bitter enemy who plots her downfall. In short, the lack of depth in her personality is shown in Donald's own thoughts when he realizes, after her death, that he would not have been happy with her.

### Newson

Newson, if we are to accept the statements of Susan and Elizabeth-Jane, is a kind, jovial man. We are given a demonstration of his kindness — or forgiving nature — when he refuses to chastise Henchard for lying to him. His trusting nature is shown again when he takes Henchard's word at face value and departs without even visiting the cemetery. Yet he is thoughtful of others. The story of his loss at sea is a kindly deception by which he will give Susan the freedom to return to Henchard.

### Abel Whittle

At first singled out for his extreme simplicity, Abel Whittle becomes more the faithful follower than the scatterbrain as the story develops. From the clownish bumpkin of the trousers episode he becomes in his fidelity to the dying Henchard a figure comparable to Lear's Fool. His care for Henchard is an ironic instance of the completeness of Henchard's fall, for Abel, the lowliest character in the book, is Henchard's last tie to humanity.

### Jopp

Jopp is a dark character who possesses no wit, business sense, or honor. What is clearest about his character is his ability to harbor a grudge and to take joy in seeing an enemy suffer. His function in the novel is at once to serve as a villain and a catalyst for villainous behavior.

## Style

### [a] Victorian Literature

It was during the Victorian period (1837-1901) that the novel became the dominant literary form, and Hardy is considered one of the major novelists of the era, along with Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, Rudyard Kipling, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, and many others. It was common for novels to be published serially, in magazines or in stand-alone sections. *The Mayor of Casterbridge* was first published serially, in twenty instalments, in an English periodical called *The Graphic* in 1886. It was published simultaneously in the United States in *Harper's Weekly*. Hardy's original manuscript, with some sections missing, is at the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester.

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* was published in book form as soon as the serial publication was complete. Many novels of this period differ slightly in their serial and book forms (authors were aware of the serial format as they wrote and structured their stories to keep readers interested from one week to the next), but this book differs substantially from the serial novel. In the serial form, for example, Henchard marries Lucetta. Hardy's biography (supposedly written by his second wife but actually written almost entirely by Hardy himself) reveals that he felt this novel had been badly damaged by the demands of serial publication and that his revisions for the book publication were not adequate to repair the story. The text of the novel that is available to today's readers is the final revision that Hardy did for the 1912 Wessex Edition of his novels.

Victorian novels often deal with social issues. While social issues play a role in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the novel was a departure from the norm because it focused consistently on a single character, Michael Henchard. Because of this limited focus, the novel is shorter and has a smaller cast of characters than many novels of the time.

### [b] Wessex Setting

Like all of Hardy's fiction, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is set in southwestern England in the region once known as Wessex. The area was invaded, settled, and named by the Saxons, who ruled it as a kingdom, in ancient times. It extended from the English Channel north to the Thames River and from Windsor Forest in the east to the Cornish coast in the west.



While most novelists set their stories in real places, Hardy is distinctive for two reasons. First, although the author traveled widely, in the writing of his novels and stories, he never strayed beyond the boundaries of his native region. In his 1912 general preface to his final, revised version of his novels, Hardy explained, "there was quite enough human nature in Wessex for one man's literary purposes." He further explained, somewhat unnecessarily, that his characters "were meant to be typically and essentially those of any and every place ... beings in whose hearts and minds that which is apparently local should be really universal."

Second, Hardy, unlike other authors, rarely invented features to add to the real landscape of Wessex. He describes the towns and farms, the roads and hotels, and the smallest details as they really were. When Hardy describes a house, it is likely that readers in his time knew exactly which house he had borrowed for his tale.

In some cases, Hardy used real place names; in others, he gave fictional names to real places. While Stonehenge and Southampton appear under their actual names, Casterbridge is, in reality, Hardy's hometown of Dorchester. In his 1912 preface, Hardy points out that his general rule was to use the real names of the major towns and places that mark the general boundaries of Wessex and to use fictional, disguised, or ancient names for most other places.

Even Hardy's characters are based on real people more than most fictional characters are. Most are composites of people he knew or knew of and his own embellishments. He borrowed bits of characters and story lines from the folklore and ballads of Wessex. The fact that he lived a long life in Wessex and had access to church records in his early work as an architect and church restorer gave him an intimate knowledge of local life and its too-frequent tragedies.

### Gothic Elements

Gothic fiction was popular between about 1760 and 1820. Gothic authors used threatening environments (the foreboding hilltop castle on a stormy night); brooding, malevolent characters; dark secrets; and the supernatural and occult to instill a sense of horror in their readers. Gothic fiction has influenced much of the fiction written in the past two hundred and fifty years, and Gothic elements were prominent in the novels of the Victorian age. In the novels of Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, Charlotte Brontë, and others, these elements made the dark side of human nature palpable to readers.

Gothic elements appear throughout *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. One striking example is the meeting between Henchard and Susan at the old Roman amphitheatre called the Ring. The Ring is outside the town, and Henchard and Susan meet there at dusk. Before Hardy narrates their meeting, he spins a long, ghostly description of the place that infuses it with a history of gloom and gore. Readers are reminded of the bloody Roman sports for which the place was built. They are told that the Ring was long the home of Casterbridge's gallows and treated to a lurid description of a murderess being "half-strangled and then burnt there in the presence of ten thousand spectators." Even now, Hardy assures readers, the Ring is the setting for violent crimes, and some old people have had visions of the amphitheater filled with cheering Roman soldiers and have actually heard their bloodthirsty roaring. By the time Hardy finally brings Henchard and Susan to the scene, he has made readers feel that there truly is something dark about their purpose here, though on the surface their meeting is cordial.

### Coincidence

Coincidence, too, was a common plot device in Hardy's time and one of which he makes frequent use in *The Mayor of Casterbridge*. For example, the furmity woman happens to stumble into Casterbridge, of all towns, and at just the right time and in just the right circumstance to do Henchard great harm. The weather happens to change just when Henchard is vulnerable to ruin because of his risky attempt to destroy Farfrae.

There are two ways of looking at Hardy's coincidences. Some readers and critics say that they make the story unrealistic and therefore less effective than it would otherwise be. Others point out that coincidences are not, in and of themselves, unrealistic, as life has its fair share of them. The question, this latter group would say, is whether the coincidences themselves are realistic or not. In the case of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, the answer seems to be at least a qualified "yes." The furmity woman has been cast as a merchant who travels around the region, so it is not incredible that she would show up in Casterbridge. Anyone who has ever farmed can testify that there is nothing more unpredictable, more uncontrollable, and, seemingly, more contrary to the wishes of farmers than the weather.

Hardy employs coincidence to help him—and his readers—explore the nature of fate. He leaves open the question of whether coincidences are merely chance suggesting that fate is blind or whether what appear to be coincidences are actually directed by some supernatural hand that guides men and women to the fates they "deserve."

## Glossary

**Adulam** haven for people with troubles and difficulties.

**aeolian modulations** Aeolus, in Greek mythology, was god of the winds. The aeolian harp was a stringed instrument constructed to produce musical sounds when exposed to the action of the wind.

**Alastor** a deity of revenge.

**amaze** amazement.

**"And here's a hand . . . thine"** from Robert Burns's well-known song, "auld Lang Syne." "Fiere" means friend or companion, and "gie's" is a dialect contraction for "give us."

**antipodean absences** absences on the other side of the world. Probably the phrase refers to Australian penal colonies.

**Argus eyes** mythological figure with one hundred eyes. When Argus was killed the eyes were placed on the tail of Juno's sacred peacock.

**ashlar** a roughhewn square block of stone.

**Ashton . . . Ravenswood** Characters in Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor*. Ashton sees Ravenswood disappear (having sunk into quicksand).

**assize town** a town where civil and criminal cases are tried by jury.

**Austerlitz** in 1805, the battle in which Napoleon defeated the Russians and the Austrians.

**ballet** ballad.

**begad** By God! A slightly toned down oath.

**bell-board** a table or board on which were placed small bells that were rung at the appropriate time by a number of ringers. (Thus, the tune depended on each ringer; hence, Casterbridge

depended on the surrounding villages and hamlets for its commerce.)

**Bellerophon** character in Greek legends who killed his brother and fled from the society of mankind.

**be-right** truly; by-right.

**Botany Bay** penal colony in Australia.

**bruckle** not trustworthy.

**butter-firkins** a firkin is a wooden vessel for holding butter or lard. Its capacity is usually the equivalent of one-fourth of a barrel. A butter-firkin is also termed as a unit of measurement approximating 55 or 56 pounds.

**Cain** in genesis: for killing his brother Abel, Cain was branded (Mark of Cain) and cursed by God to wander among men, and to be shunned by them.

**Calpurnia's cheek was pale** In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, Brutus remarks that the cheek of Caesar's wife — Calpurnia — is pale. The reference is that Farfrae (equivalent to a Caesar among the crowd) has his Brutus.

**Capharnaum** from Matthew; place of darkness.

**carkings** disturbing, worrisome, vexing. This usage is archaic.

**carrefour** crossroads, open square (French).

**chassez-déchassez chassé**, a quick set of gliding, sideward movements in dancing, always led by the same foot; from the French chasser. Hence, chassez-déchassez, a French dance from right to left.

**chine** a ridge or strip of wood; refers to such a strip on the bottom of a cask, on which the workman turns the cask, thus moving it without tipping it over.

**chiney** china, dishes.

**éclat** distinction or brilliance (French).

**cleavers . . . rams'-horns** Old musical instruments or noisemakers; a "croud" would be a fiddle and "humstrums" would be cranked instruments similar to a hurdy-gurdy.

**Comus** a masque by Milton.

**the Constantines** Emperors of Rome, father and son. Constantine the Great moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome To Byzantium, whose name was changed to Constantinople. Constantine II ruled for a short time after his father's death.

**corn-factor** a factor is a commission merchant. In Scotland the meaning may be applied to a managing agent of an estate.

**Correggio** famous Italian artist (1494-1534).

**cow-barton** a cow-yard.

**cyma-recta** an architectural term: a curved profile partly concave and partly convex, the convex part nearest the wall (often referring to a curved molding).

**Dan Cupid** Roman god of love. "Dan" is applied humorously to mean "Sir."

**dand** The word "dandy" is left uncompleted.

**danged** damned (used as an expletive).

**Diana Multimammia** many-breasted Diana. The sense is that the burial-mounds appeared to be the many breasts.

**diment** diamond.

**dogs** the iron bars on which the logs are placed in a fireplace.

**doxology** the character means "theology," but even then "theology" would not be the appropriate word.

**dungmixin** dung-heap, dunghill.



**'en** dialect for "him."

**espaliers** trellises or stakes on which small fruit trees or plants are trained to grow in a flattened-out state.

**the evil scrofula.** A toad-bag contained the legs of frogs, and was worn around the neck. This superstition held that the toad-bag was a cure for scrofula (sometimes called "the king's evil").

**fall** a veil attached to the hat which women wore as a custom of modesty when walking in public.

**Family Bible, Josephus, Whole Duty of Man** three works considered indispensable in every respectable household. The Family Bible was a large Bible which usually contained a page in the front for recording marriages, births, deaths; Josephus Flavius (A.D. 37-100?), Jewish historian and statesman. His *History of the Jewish War* and other work shed much valuable light upon the occurrences of the Bible; *Whole Duty of Man*, 1658, of anonymous origin. A book of devotions.

**Faust** the main character in Goethe's monumental drama.

**fête carillonnée** a celebration complete with the pealing of bells (French).

**Flemish ladders** ladders whose sides become narrower toward the top.

**forward stripling** upstart youngster.

**fretted** my gizzard worried.

**fustian** coarse cotton.

**gaberlunzie** wandering beggar.

**Gallows Hill** a reference to the English Civil War incident in the seventeenth century which resulted in the sentencing to death of about 300 people.

**gawk-hammer way** awkward, ridiculous.

**get it in train** to get it started.

**gibbous** rounded, seemingly hunch-backed.

**giddy** in a rotating or whirling fashion.

**go snacks wi'en go snacks with him;** to eat at his table; to live with him.

**growed wheat** underdeveloped, poor wheat which looks developed to the untrained eye.

**Gurth's collar** a swineherd in Scott's *Ivanhoe* who wore a brass ring around his neck, which could only be filed through to free him of the collar.

**Hannah Dominy from Latin Anno Domine (A.D., in the year of our Lord).** A slight bit of satirizing of the rather ignorant type of justice of the peace. The word "instinct" which precedes the corruption of the legal phrase should be "instance."

'a he.

**hontish** high-handed, haughty.

**it mid be** it might be.

**"Jack's as good as his master"** a proverb. The meaning is that the servant has become as good as the employer.

**"John Gilpin"** a ballad by William Cowper (1731-1800).

**Jotuns** giants in Norse mythology.

**jowned jolted.** The expression would seem to mean, "Damn it, so am I," or "Be damned, so am I!"

**jumps or night-rail jumps** would be equal to corset-stays, and a night-rail equivalent to a night-gown.

**Juno's bird** peacock.

**Karnac** In Brittany: Carnac. Over two miles of parallel monoliths.

**keacorn** dialect for throat.

**kerb** curb.

**kerseymere** fine wool woven so that diagonal lines appear on the material.

**lammigers** lame people.

**larry** commotion or disturbance.

**leery** tired.

**a less scrupulous Job** The biblical character Job, who only lived to do right, cursed the day of his birth when he was punished by God for no apparent reason. Hence, Henchard, not quite as conscientious in his desire to do good, also curses himself as Job did.

**Life-holders, copy-holders** Life-holders held a lifetime lease to their homes and land. Copy-holders did not own original legal deeds.

**"like Job, I could curse the day that gave me birth."** from the Book of Job, in which Job, in the midst of his suffering, actually curses the day of his birth.

**list** a strip, or steak.

**locus standi** accepted or recognized standing (Latin).

**Lucifer** the planet Venus when it appears as the morning star.

**Mai Dun** a large fortress of the ancient Britons.

**manna-food** the food which God supplied to the Children of Israel during their wanderings in the desert.

**Martinmas** summer late or Indian summer; that is, Susan's life became more bearable in her later years.

**Martin's Day** November 11th.

**Minerva-eyes . . . face** The sense is that Elizabeth-Jane has acquired wisdom, and that she imparts the spirit of wisdom in her movements.

**"Miss M'Leod of Ayr"** a tune that Hardy knew when a child.

**modus vivendi** working arrangement; a way of living (Latin).

**mon ami étourderie** mon ami, my friend; étourderie, lack of concern — thoughtless action; thoughtlessness (French).

**mullioned** a vertical dividing strip in an opening or a window. The sense of the passage is that the vertical strips on the windows should be perpendicular to the ground, but they are not. Thus, the building looks quaintly out of kilter.

**mun** Scotch and British dialect: must.

**must start** genteel must begin in a manner appropriate to a well-bred person.

**Nathan tones** The prophet Nathan was damning in his onslaught against King David's marriage to Bath-Sheba.

**netting** fish-seines making fishing nets; also, fixing or repairing the nets.

**netting** making netting, the groundwork for delicate embroidery.

**no'thern** a dialect word; wandering in mind, or incoherent.

**Novalis** Baron Friedrich von Hardenburg (1772-1801) whose pen-name was Novalis; poet and novelist.

**'od** shortened from the exclamation, "God!," so as to avoid profanity.

**of aught besides** of anything else, also.

**oven-pyle** chips of wood for lighting a fire.

**Ovid** famous Latin poet (43 B.C.-18 A.D.). The line is from his *Metamorphoses*: "Though I approve of the better things I see, I follow after the worse."

**pari passu** at the same speed (Latin).

**a pensioner** of Farfrae's wife to be put on relief by Farfrae's wife, or to be financially dependent on Farfrae's wife.

**pier-glass** mirror.

**pis aller** the last resource (French).

**pixy-ring** a fairy-ring. A term given to the area or ring on the meadow where a different type of grass is growing.

**plim** blown up, swollen.

**Prestor John** in mythology, a king who was punished by the gods. He was condemned to have his food snatched from him by harpies, half-woman, half-birdlike creatures who acted as the gods' avengers.

**Princess** Ida in Tennyson's poem *The Princess*.

**the prophet Baruch in the Apocrypha.** The sense is that Elizabeth-Jane was not considered a truly great beauty adulated by all.

**quickset** hawthorn hedges.

**randy** Scotch dialect: boisterous, fun-loving. The sense is that Donald's character is one that loves merry-making, as opposed to Henchard's more staid personality.

**rantipole rubbish** rough or boisterous language or verses sung to accompany a procession which contains an acted out scene of a man beating his wife ( the rantipole ride).

**rheumy** sniffing, runny-nose. The word refers to having a cold.

**the Ring** referring to Maumbury Rings in Dorchester, which served as the public gallows for the first half of the 18th century. Its history goes back many centuries. Under the Romans it was an arena for

gladiatorial and wild beast displays. there is a certain unwholesome aura surrounding the Ring due to its history.

**Rochefoucauld** French author whose philosophy states that human conduct is motivated by selfishness.

**rosette** an ornament resembling a badge similar to a rose.

**rouge-et-noir** from the French: red and black.

**Royal unicorn** part of the Royal emblem, or coat-of-arms of Great Britain.

**rub o't** rub of it: a problem, hindrance, doubt.

**ruddy polls** ruddy — reddish, healthy glow; poll — top or back of the head. Hence shiny bald heads visible through the shutters of the Inn.

**rummers** a tall stemless glass for drinking.

**sacrarium** the sanctuary, or the place before the altar.

**Samson shorn from Judges.** A strong man who has been robbed of his strength.

**scantling** a little bit, a tiny piece.

**schiedam gin** (named after the town in Holland where it had been made).

**Schwarzwasser black-water.** It is also the name of a river in Poland (German).

**seed-lips** baskets for seeds.

**sequestered** taken over for the purpose of settling claims.

**sequestration** seclusion.

**"the Seven Sleepers had a dog"** referring to a portion found in the Koran: Seven sleepers in a cave, and their dog the eighth.



**"shaken a little to-year"** disturbed or bothered this year.

**Shallow and Silence in Shakespeare's *King Henry IV, Part II*.** They are comic characters and serve as country justices of the peace.

**"She'll wish her cake dough . . ."** She'll wish she hadn't done it.

**skimmity-ride skimmington-ride:** a rowdy procession which is intended to make fun of a man whose wife is shrewish or unfaithful.

**skipping on the small** skipping in small "skips."

**small table ninepenny** cheap drinks.

**sniff and snaff** haven't agreed to more than accepting his gentlemanly attentions (especially in regard to matrimonial plans), would be the sense of the expression.

**solicitus timor** a worrisome fear (Latin).

**sotto voce** under one's breath, in a low voice (Italian).

**spencer** a bodice.

**St. Helier** large town in Jersey.

**staddles** a raised frame, or a platform used for stacking hay or straw to avoid contamination from moisture or vermin.

**Stonehenge** a famous monument dating back to prehistoric times, consisting of stone pillars placed in a circular fashion.

**strook** struck.

**stunpoll** stone head.

**swingels** part of a flail.

**swipes** weak beer.

**terpsichorean** figure Terpsichore, Greek Muse of the dance; figures in dance positions.

**the Thames Tunnel completed in 1843.** Hardy might be referring to toys that represented the tunnel. He might also be referring to the stereoscope, a viewing device that represented pictures in seemingly three-dimensional perspective.

**thill horse** the horse which is harnessed between the shafts of the wagon.

**thimble-riggers** tricksters, conjurers. The expression may refer to the trick of trying to guess under which of three thimbles a pea is hidden. The hand of the "thimble-rigger" was, of course, faster than the eye of the spectator.

**Titian** famous Venetian artist (1477-1576).

**to close with Henchard** to engage Henchard in combat.

**to see that lady toppered** to see that lady brought low — brought to shame.

**trap** a trap-door.

**turmit-hit** turnip-head, turnip-top, idiot.

**twanking** whining; in this sense weak and helpless.

**varnished** for 'natomies skeleton bones sold, varnished, and used in colleges or schools for the study of anatomy.

**'vation** salvation.

**via** road, path (Latin).

**victorine** a scarf worn over neck and shoulders.

**viva voce** by voice, oral; that is, Henchard kept almost no business books or records (Italian).

**voot** foot.

**waggon-tilts** the canvas coverings of wagons.

**wambling** weaving, wobbling.

**was with child** an old form of saying "was pregnant."

**water-tights** boots.

**weir** an obstruction or dam placed in a stream to divert or raise the waters.

**well-be-doing** a man who is well off, doing well.

**Weltlust** enjoyment or love of worldly pleasure (German).

**"We've let back our strings . . ."** We've loosened the strings (on the instruments).

**Weydon-Priors** a village in upper Wessex, probably the fictitious name for Weyhill in northwest Hampshire.

**wheel** ventilator a fan which revolves by the action of the wind.

**wimbling** boring a hole, or piercing as with a wimble.

**winnowing machine** a machine used to separate grain from the chaff.

**wo'th** a varden worth a farthing.

**Yahoo in *Gulliver's Travels*, by Swift.** An animal that looks like man, but behaves like a dumb, vicious beast.

**yard of clay** a long clay pipe.

**"you son of a bee," "dee me if I haint"** The constable does not want to swear in court.

**"you would have zeed me!"** you would have seen me.

**zilver-snuffers** silver snuffers; a snuffer is a scissors-like instrument used for clipping the wick of a candle.

**zwailing** swaying, shifting.

## Adaptations

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### Film and TV

- *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a silent film of 1921
- *Mayor Nair*, a 1966 Indian [Malayalam](#) film
- *Daag*, a 1973 [Bollywood](#) romantic drama film
- *Vichitra Jeevitham*, a 1978 remake of *Daag*
- *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a 1978 seven-part serial for BBC TV
- *The Claim*, a 2000 film set in the American West with events loosely based on the novel
- *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a 2003 British TV film

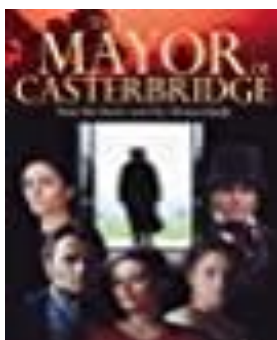
### Radio

- *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a 1994 four-part dramatisation by Sally Hedges with [David Calder](#) as Michael Henchard, [Jason Flemyng](#) as Donald Farfrae, Janet Dale as Susan, Andrea Wray as Elizabeth-Jane, Sandra Berkin as Lucetta, [Mary Wimbush](#) as the Furmity-seller and [John Nettles](#) as Newson.
- *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a 2008 three-part radio play by [Helen Edmundson](#) for [BBC Radio 4's](#) Classic Serial slot.

### Opera

- *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, a 1951 opera by the young British composer [Peter Tranchell](#), with a libretto by Tranchell and Peter Bentley. It received its first performance at that year's Cambridge Festival.

## The Mayor of Casterbridge [Film]



[The Mayor of Casterbridge](#) (2003 TV Movie)

Please go to these web links to watch the Film:

[a]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vxWY1eJU1w&ab\\_channel=JaskaranManocha](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vxWY1eJU1w&ab_channel=JaskaranManocha)

[b]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Zf553lCh8&ab\\_channel=ChestertonRadio](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Zf553lCh8&ab_channel=ChestertonRadio)

## Awards

**[1 win & 3 nominations]**

BAFTA Awards [2004](#)

<b>Nominee</b> BAFTA TV Award	Best Costume Design <a href="#">Lyn Avery</a>
----------------------------------	--

Irish Film and Television Awards [2004](#)

<b>Winner</b> IFTA Award	Best Actor in a TV Drama <a href="#">Ciarán Hinds</a>
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Monte-Carlo TV Festival [2004](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Nymph	Best Mini Series UK
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Royal Television Society, UK [2004](#)

<b>Nominee</b> RTS Television Award	Best Sound - Drama <a href="#">Tim Fraser</a> <a href="#">Michael Corden</a> <a href="#">Lee Taylor</a>
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**Please visit to know more about the Film:**

[https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0283474/?ref\\_=ttawd\\_awd\\_tt](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0283474/?ref_=ttawd_awd_tt)

## Some Selected Pictures





**Please visit to listen to his Book (Audiobook : all 45 chapters)**

[a]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e\\_Fq2y6c3s8&ab\\_channel=AudioBooksUnleashed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_Fq2y6c3s8&ab_channel=AudioBooksUnleashed) [12hrs : 41 min]

[b]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Zf553ICh8&ab\\_channel=ChestertonRadio](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Zf553ICh8&ab_channel=ChestertonRadio) [Listen the story through Chesterton Radio]

## **Annotated Bibliography**

[1] <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/casterbridge/>

Provides Book Summary, Characters, Literary Devices, Quotations, Essay, and the complete novel [all 45 chapters].

[2] <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/m/the-mayor-of-casterbridge/book-summary>

Book summary, Summary and Analysis, Summary and Analysis of 45 chapters, Character Analysis, Thomas Hardy Biography, Critical Essays, Structure of the Novel, Theme of the Novel, Quiz and Glossary

[3] <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/mayor-casterbridge#Sources>

Provides Introduction, Plot summary, Author Biography, Characters, Themes, Styles, Historical context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Further Reading.

[4] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Mayor\\_of\\_Casterbridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mayor_of_Casterbridge)

Provides Plot, Principal Characters, Setting & date, First publication, Later appreciation.

[5]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Mayor\\_of\\_Casterbridge\\_\(TV\\_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Mayor_of_Casterbridge_(TV_series))

***The Mayor of Casterbridge*** is a 1978 BBC seven-part serial based on the eponymous 1886 book by the British novelist Thomas Hardy. The six-hour drama was written by television dramatist Dennis Potter and directed by David Giles with Alan Bates as the title character. It was released as a 3-disc DVD box set in May 2003.

[6]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e\\_Fq2y6c3s8&ab\\_channel=AudioBooksUnleashed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_Fq2y6c3s8&ab_channel=AudioBooksUnleashed)

One can listen all 45 chapters of the Novel [Audiobook].

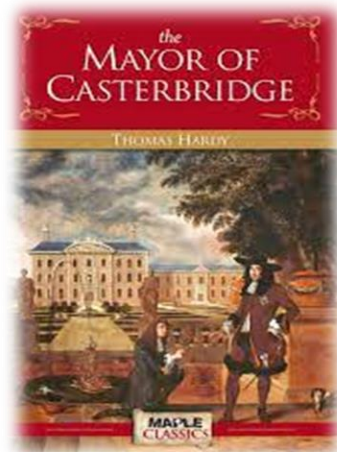
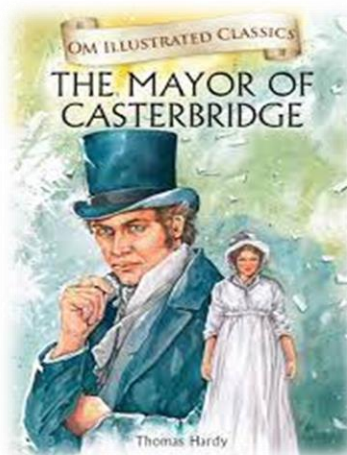
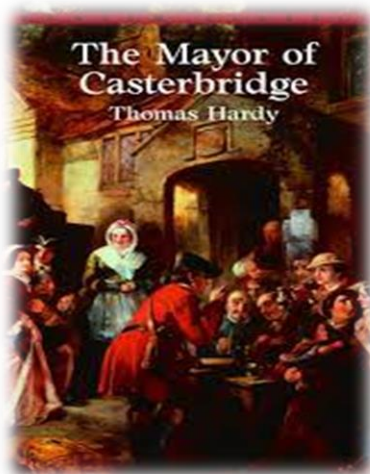
Irritated and drunken, an itinerant farm-worker sells his wife and child to a stranger. Thus begins "*The Mayor of Casterbridge*", set in rural and small-town England in the mid-1800s. In the original subtitle, Hardy called this the story of "a man of character," and the central character, Michael Henchard, is one of English fiction's greatest creations. Henchard is deeply developed as a realistic character, but also larger-than-life in the manner of a Greek or Shakespearean tragic hero — huge in his determination and huge in his failings. The novel deals with the struggles between individual will, the hold of the past, and the relentless control of circumstances in a changing society.

[7] Download the book FREE

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/143>

[8] <https://www.hardysociety.org/life/>

The Thomas Hardy Society is an educational Charity founded in 1968 with the intention of promoting public knowledge and understanding of the life and works of the Dorset poet and novelist to anyone with an interest in Thomas Hardy anywhere in the world. It is a Society as much for the lay-enthusiast as the scholar, student or general reader.



*Thomas Hardy*

# Tess of the d'Urbervilles



# Tess of the d'Urbervilles

Thomas Hardy

**Tess of the d'Urbervilles**, novel by Thomas Hardy, first published serially in bowdlerized form in the *Graphic* (July–December 1891) and in its entirety in book form (three volumes) the same year. It was subtitled *A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented* because Hardy felt that its heroine was a virtuous victim of a rigid Victorian moral code. Now considered Hardy's masterwork, it departed from conventional Victorian fiction in its focus on the rural lower class and in its open treatment of sexuality and religion.

## Book Summary

Tess Durbeyfield is a 16-year-old simple country girl, the eldest daughter of John and Joan Durbeyfield. In a chance meeting with Parson Tringham along the road one night, John Durbeyfield discovers that he is the descendent of the d'Urbervilles, an ancient, monied family who had land holdings as far back as William the Conqueror in 1066. Upon this discovery, the financially strapped Durbeyfield family learns of a nearby "relative," and John and his wife Joan send Tess to "claim kin" in order to alleviate their impoverished condition. While visiting the d'Urbervilles at The Slopes, Tess meets Alec d'Urberville, who finds himself attracted to Tess. Alec arranges for Tess to become the caretaker for his blind mother's poultry, and Tess moves to The Slopes to take up the position. While in residence at the d'Urbervilles, Alec seduces and rapes Tess.

Tess returns home, gives birth to a son, Sorrow, the product of the rape, and works as a field worker on nearby farms. Sorrow becomes ill and dies in infancy, leaving Tess devastated at her loss. Tess makes another journey away from home to nearby Talbothays Dairy to become a milkmaid to a good-natured dairyman, Mr. Crick. There she meets and falls in love with a travelling farmer's apprentice, Angel Clare. She tries to resist Angel's pleas for her hand in marriage but eventually marries Angel. He does not know Tess' past, although she has tried on several occasions to tell him. After the wedding, Tess and Angel confess their pasts to each other. Tess forgives Angel for his past indiscretions, but Angel cannot forgive Tess for having a child with another man.

Angel suggests that the two split up, with Angel going to Brazil for a year and Tess going back home. Tess agrees and returns to her parent's house. Tess eventually leaves home again for work in another town at Flintcomb-Ash farm, where the



working conditions are very harsh. Tess is reunited with some of her friends from Talbothays, and they all settle in at Flintcomb to the hard work routine. Tess is determined to see Angel's family in nearby Emminster but loses her nerve at the last minute. On her return to Flintcomb, Tess sees Alec again, now a practicing evangelical minister, preaching to the folks in the countryside. When Alec sees Tess, he is struck dumb and leaves his position to pursue her. Alec follows her to Flintcomb, asking her to marry him. Tess refuses in the strongest terms, but Alec is persistent.

Tess returns home to find her mother recovering from her illness, but her father, John, dies suddenly from an unknown ailment. The burden of her family's welfare falls on Tess' shoulders. Destitute now and homeless (they have been evicted from their cottage), the Durbeyfield's have nowhere to go. Tess knows that she cannot resist Alec's money and the comforts her family can use. Furthermore, Alec insists that Angel will never return and has abandoned her — an idea that Tess has already come to believe herself.

In the meantime, Angel returns from Brazil to look for Tess and to begin his own farm in England. When Angel finds Tess' family, Joan informs him that Tess has gone to Sandbourne, a fashionable seaside resort in the south of England. Angel finds Tess there, living as an upper-class lady with Alec d'Urberville. In the meeting with Angel, Tess asks him to leave and not return for her. Angel does leave, resigned that he had judged Tess too harshly and returned too late.

After her meeting with Angel, Tess confronts Alec and accuses him of lying to her about Angel. In a fit of anger and fury, Tess stabs Alec through the heart with a carving knife, killing him. Tess finds Angel to tell him of the deed. Angel has trouble believing Tess' story but welcomes her back.

The two travel the countryside via back roads to avoid detection. Their plan is to make for a port and leave the country as soon as possible. They spend a week in a vacant house, reunited in bliss for a short time. They are discovered, however, and the trail ends at Stonehenge, the ancient pagan monument, when the police arrest Tess and take her away.

Before she is executed for her crime, Tess has Angel promise to marry her sister Liza Lu once she is gone. Angel agrees and he, along with Liza Lu, witnesses a black flag raised in the city of Wintoncester, signifying that Tess' death sentence has been carried out. The two, Angel and Liza Lu, leave together, and the tragic tale of Tess ends.

## About *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*

### **Introduction**

Hardy began *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* in 1888-89 and considered such names as Love, Cis/Cissy, and Sue, for the title character. Eventually, he decided on Tess. Hardy had been working on this manuscript with the intention of submitting it for serial publication, in which only a few chapters would be released at a time; depending on the material's reception and the publisher's willingness, these chapters would then later be combined in book form. Hardy contracted with W. F. Tillotson & Son in 1887 for a serialized story to



be delivered in four installments between 1887 and June 30, 1889. Hardy also negotiated with *Harper's Bazaar* in America for the story at about the same time.



Tillotson & Son realized that it had a racy novel on its hands when editors became aware of the serial's content. The publishers suggested revisions of certain scenes and complete deletions of others, but Hardy refused, and the two parted ways amicably, leaving the book unpublished. Fortunately, Hardy had an offer to publish the serial in the *Graphic (London) Illustrated Weekly Newspaper*. After much revision, the novel appeared as a serial on July

4, 1891, in England (in the *Graphic* and the *Nottinghamshire Guardian and Midlands Counties Advertiser*) and Australia (the *Sydney Mail*). It appeared on July 18 in America in *Harper's Bazaar*.

After a successful reception as a serial, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was published in book form and consisted of three volumes. In late 1892, the entire set was combined into one volume and sold well. By 1900, Hardy authorized a paperback version of the novel, which sold 300,000 editions in England in one year. Hardy continually tinkered with the subsequent editions, and he worked on revisions up until the time of his death in 1928.



### Early Reviews

Although the first reviews of the novel were generally good, later critics charged that the book had some serious defects. The *Saturday Review* called the novel "an unpleasant novel told in a very unpleasant way." Another critic, Mowbray Morris, published the letter sent to Hardy rejecting the serial when it was proposed to *Macmillan's Magazine*, a literary magazine whose contributors included — in addition to Hardy — Tennyson, Herbert Coleridge (grandson of S.T. Coleridge), Bret Harte, and Mowbray Morris. *Harper's*



*Weekly* called *Tess* "artificial" and "not in the reality of any sane world we recognize." Novelist Henry James called *Tess* "chock-full of faults and falsities and yet [possessed of] a singular beauty and charm." Others thought the novel "not to their personal tastes in some respects, but justly appreciated its greatness in others." *The Atlantic Monthly* called *Tess* "Hardy's best novel yet."

It seems, however, that Hardy overlooked the positive reviews, and after reading Morris' review, Hardy wrote, "Well, if this sort of thing continues no more novel-writing for me."

It was the hint of a vow that Hardy would fulfill, only a few years later. He would write only one more novel, *Jude the Obscure*.

Still, *Tess* continued to sell well in Hardy's time and has spawned a great wealth of literary criticism that continues even today. The negative critics have been silenced, and *Tess* continues to be read and reread as a classic of English literature.

### **Historical Context**



The Victorian Era when Hardy lived was a time of great change. Queen Victoria ruled England from 1837 until her death in 1901. During her 63-year reign, England became the most powerful and wealthiest country in the world through its colonial acquisition and by harnessing the power of the Industrial Revolution. The population in England doubled during Victoria's reign, and the

economy of the country changed from agriculture-based to industry-based. More people were enfranchised (that is, given the right to vote) and, through this, gained influence in government. The Parliament passed labor laws that improved labor conditions, established universal schooling for all children, and reformed the civil service system. Britain ended restrictions on foreign trade, opening the way for the island to become a source for both raw materials and finished goods to an ever-increasing international market.

Victoria, interested in the welfare of her people, worked hard to pass meaningful reforms, and she earned the respect of her subjects. Her prime ministers were her greatest assets, and with them, Queen Victoria decreased the powers of the monarchy to empower the members of the prime minister's cabinet. As a result, the British monarchy has been able to endure, unlike the monarchies in most other countries.

The changes that occurred during the Victorian era affected the lives of every person living in England in both great and small ways. As England quickly moved from an agriculture-based society to one that would produce many of the world's goods, factories replaced individual workshops, and people moved from small towns to large cities in search of work. Mobility and the transport of goods were increased with the invention of steamships and the development of a railway system. The balance of traditional class distinctions shifted as



more people prospered, amassing wealth and power that had been unthinkable in the years prior to this era. These tumultuous changes resulted in an examination of the traditional ways of thinking and acting, and the foundations of English society — family, religion, class divisions, and so on — came under increasing scrutiny.

One area that was particularly affected by the changes in England was religion. The Church of England was traditionally conservative and offered a literal interpretation of the Bible. During the Victorian period, however, as people began to see the church as an agent for social change as well as an agent for personal salvation, the question became how — and even whether — the church should best fulfill these missions. The result was

a schism in the church that fostered three movements: the High Church movement, the Middle Church movement, and the Low Church movement.



The High Church movement was designed to align the Church of England with the "Catholic" side of Anglicanism. The thinking here was that traditional practices were the standard by which faith could be expressed and that supreme authority resided in the Church. The Middle Church movement cared less for tradition and believed that faith could be expressed in various ways,

including through social action. The Low Church Movement believed that evangelicals were a force that could reform the church from within and without. Individual and biblical bases of faith were hallmarks of this movement. Evangelicals tackled serious issues of the day: housing and welfare of the poor, as well as social reform. They also believed in spreading the gospel around the world by any means necessary.

The growing reliance on science to explain the nature of man and his relationship with



his world opened the doors for further examination of traditionally held beliefs. The publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), which suggested that species evolved from common ancestors that could be found through scientific research, challenged the belief that God created each species individually and separately from every other species. The

agnostic movement, which relied on scientific evidence and reason to find universal truths and which held that the existence of God could not be empirically proven, took hold and gained momentum.

From these ideological splits, religious liberals and conservatives battled over fundamental questions of faith and religious practice. In Hardy's work, we can see that this debate was one that he entered into. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Hardy's protagonist finds herself in a world where she questions religion, questions faith, looks for meaning in life, and searches for the truths that mankind has sought for centuries.

### **Literary Context**

The body of Victorian literature is tremendous and would be difficult to categorize with only a few authors. Hardy's contemporaries included the likes of Charles Dickens, Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, E.M. Forester, and Joseph Conrad. Each contributed his or her work to the body of general human knowledge and, to one degree or another, considered the issues that had become a part of the English "discussion."

Dickens criticized the treatment of the poor and children, the courts, and the clergy in *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, and *Bleak House*. William Thackeray challenged Victorian society at all levels in *Vanity Fair*. The Brontë sisters — Emily, Charlotte, and Anne — wove romantic elements with tragic heroines and heroes in *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Agnes Grey*. Matthew Arnold took the discussion of worldly happiness versus religious faith in his poems "The Scholar Gypsy" and "Dover Beach." Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, an epic poem on the loss of dear friends, discusses intellectual



and religious issues of the day. Conrad wrote on the psychology of guilt, heroism, and honor in his novels *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness*.

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is one of Hardy's Wessex novels, so called because the action in each story takes place in the Wessex region. Other of the Wessex novels include *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). In each, the main characters are dealt a cruel fate that they must overcome or be crushed by. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, Michael Henchard, a respected man, faces a spiritual and physical deterioration that, in the end, destroys him. The main character in *Jude*, Jude Fawley, suffers from a desperate misery of body and mind and dies, like Tess in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, a victim of fate.

## Characters

### Tess Durbeyfield

The novel's protagonist. Tess is a beautiful, loyal young woman living with her impoverished family in the village of Marlott. Tess has a keen sense of responsibility and is committed to doing the best she can for her family, although her inexperience and lack of wise parenting leave her extremely vulnerable. Her life is complicated when her father discovers a link to the noble line of the d'Urbervilles, and, as a result, Tess is sent to work at the d'Urberville mansion. Unfortunately, her ideals cannot prevent her from sliding further and further into misfortune after she becomes pregnant by Alec d'Urberville. The terrible irony is that Tess and her family are not really related to this branch of the d'Urbervilles at all: Alec's father, a merchant named Simon Stokes, simply assumed the name after he retired.

### Angel Clare

An intelligent young man who has decided to become a farmer to preserve his intellectual freedom from the pressures of city life. Angel's father and his two brothers are respected clergymen, but Angel's religious doubts have kept him from joining the ministry. He meets Tess when she is a milkmaid at the Talbothays Dairy and quickly falls in love with her.

### Alec d'Urberville

The handsome, amoral son of a wealthy merchant named Simon Stokes. Alec is not really a d'Urberville—his father simply took on the name of the ancient noble family after he built his mansion and retired. Alec is a manipulative, sinister young man who does everything he can to seduce the inexperienced Tess when she comes to work for his family. When he finally has his way with her, out in the woods, he subsequently tries to help her but is unable to make her love him.

### Mr. John Durbeyfield

Tess's father, a lazy peddler in Marlott. John is naturally quick, but he hates work. When he learns that he descends from the noble line of the d'Urbervilles, he is quick to make an attempt to profit from the connection.

### **Mrs. Joan Durbeyfield**

Tess's mother. Joan has a strong sense of propriety and very particular hopes for Tess's life. She is continually disappointed and hurt by the way in which her daughter's life actually proceeds. But she is also somewhat simpleminded and naturally forgiving, and she is unable to remain angry with Tess—particularly once Tess becomes her primary means of support.

### **Mrs. d'Urberville**

Alec's mother, and the widow of Simon Stokes. Mrs. d'Urberville is blind and often ill. She cares deeply for her animals, but not for her maid Elizabeth, her son Alec, nor Tess when she comes to work for her. In fact, she never sees Tess as anything more than an impoverished girl.

### **Marian, Izz Huett, and Retty Priddle**

Milkmaids whom Tess befriends at the Talbothays Dairy. Marian, Izz, and Retty remain close to Tess throughout the rest of her life. They are all in love with Angel and are devastated when he chooses Tess over them: Marian turns to drink, Retty attempts suicide, and Izz nearly runs off to Brazil with Angel when he leaves Tess. Nevertheless, they remain helpful to Tess. Marian helps her find a job at a farm called Flintcomb-Ash, and Marian and Izz write Angel a plaintive letter encouraging him to give Tess another chance.

### **Reverend Clare**

Angel's father, a somewhat intractable but principled clergyman in the town of Emminster. Mr. Clare considers it his duty to convert the populace. One of his most difficult cases proves to be none other than Alec d'Urberville.

### **Mrs. Clare**

Angel's mother, a loving but snobbish woman who places great stock in social class. Mrs. Clare wants Angel to marry a suitable woman, meaning a woman with the proper social, financial, and religious background. Mrs. Clare initially looks down on Tess as a "simple" and impoverished girl, but later grows to appreciate her.

### **Reverend Felix Clare**

Angel's brother, a village curate.

### **Reverend Cuthbert**

Clare Angel's brother, a classical scholar and dean at Cambridge. Cuthbert, who can concentrate only on university matters, marries Mercy Chant.



### Eliza Louisa Durbeyfield

Tess's younger sister. Tess believes Liza-Lu has all of Tess's own good qualities and none of her bad ones, and she encourages Angel to look after and even marry Liza-Lu after Tess dies.

### Sorrow

Tess's son with Alec d'Urberville. Sorrow dies in his early infancy, after Tess christens him herself. She later buries him herself as well, and decorates his grave.

### Mercy Chant

The daughter of a friend of the Reverend Clare. Mr. Clare hopes Angel will marry Mercy, but after Angel marries Tess, Mercy becomes engaged to his brother Cuthbert instead.

## Themes

### The Injustice of Existence

Unfairness dominates the lives of Tess and her family to such an extent that it begins to seem like a general aspect of human existence in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Tess does not mean to kill Prince, but she is punished anyway, just as she is unfairly punished for her own rape by Alec. Nor is there justice waiting in heaven. Christianity teaches that there is compensation in the afterlife for unhappiness suffered in this life, but the only devout Christian encountered in the novel may be the reverend, Mr. Clare, who seems more or less content in his life anyway. For others in their misery, Christianity offers little solace of heavenly justice. Mrs. Durbeyfield never mentions otherworldly rewards. The converted Alec preaches heavenly justice for earthly sinners, but his faith seems shallow and insincere. Generally, the moral atmosphere of the novel is not Christian justice at all, but pagan injustice. The forces that rule human life are absolutely unpredictable and not necessarily well-disposed to us. The pre-Christian rituals practiced by the farm workers at the opening of the novel, and Tess's final rest at Stonehenge at the end, remind us of a world where the gods are not just and fair, but whimsical and uncaring. When the narrator concludes the novel with the statement that "'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals (in the Aeschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess," we are reminded that justice must be put in ironic quotation marks, since it is not really just at all. What passes for "Justice" is in fact one of the pagan gods enjoying a bit of "sport," or a frivolous game.

### Changing Ideas of Social Class in Victorian England

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles* presents complex pictures of both the importance of social class in nineteenth-century England and the difficulty of defining class in any simple way. Certainly the Durbeyfields are a powerful emblem of the way in which class is no longer evaluated in Victorian times as it would have been in the

Middle Ages—that is, by blood alone, with no attention paid to fortune or worldly success. Indubitably the Durbeyfields have purity of blood, yet for the parson and nearly everyone else in the novel, this fact amounts to nothing more than a piece of genealogical trivia. In the Victorian context, cash matters more than lineage, which explains how Simon Stokes, Alec's father, was smoothly able to use his large fortune to purchase a lustrous family name and transform his clan into the Stoke-d'Urbervilles. The d'Urbervilles pass for what the Durbeyfields truly are—authentic nobility—simply because definitions of class have changed. The issue of class confusion even affects the Clare clan, whose most promising son, Angel, is intent on becoming a farmer and marrying a milkmaid, thus bypassing the traditional privileges of a Cambridge education and a parsonage. His willingness to work side by side with the farm laborers helps endear him to Tess, and their acquaintance would not have been possible if he were a more traditional and elitist aristocrat. Thus, the three main characters in the Angel-Tess-Alec triangle are all strongly marked by confusion regarding their respective social classes, an issue that is one of the main concerns of the novel.

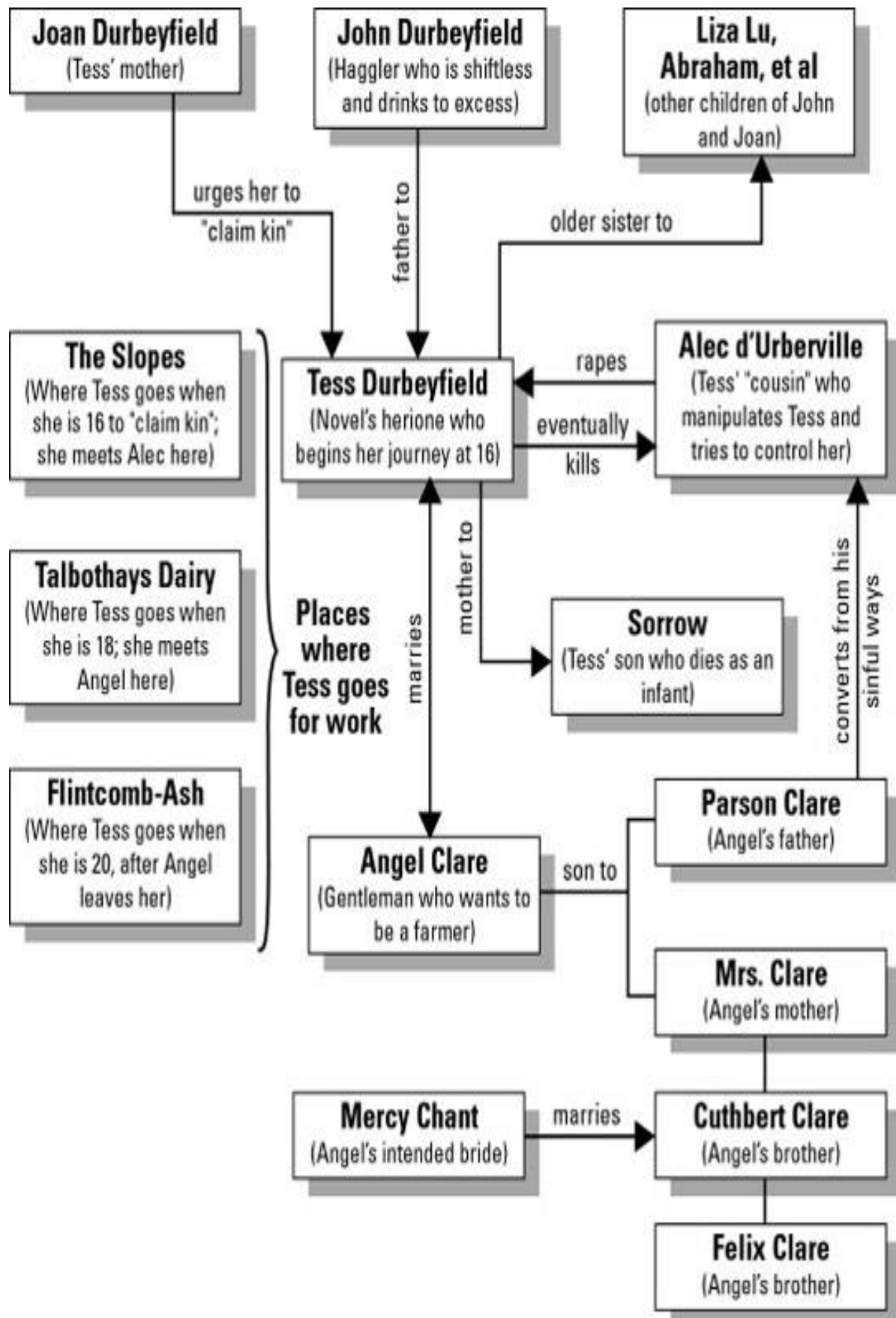
### Men Dominating Women

One of the recurrent themes of the novel is the way in which men can dominate women, exerting a power over them linked primarily to their maleness. Sometimes this command is purposeful, in the man's full knowledge of his exploitation, as when Alec acknowledges how bad he is for seducing Tess for his own momentary pleasure. Alec's act of abuse, the most life-altering event that Tess experiences in the novel, is clearly the most serious instance of male domination over a female. But there are other, less blatant examples of women's passivity toward dominant men. When, after Angel reveals that he prefers Tess, Tess's friend Retty attempts suicide and her friend Marian becomes an alcoholic, which makes their earlier schoolgirl-type crushes on Angel seem disturbing. This devotion is not merely fanciful love, but unhealthy obsession. These girls appear utterly dominated by a desire for a man who, we are told explicitly, does not even realize that they are interested in him. This sort of unconscious male domination of women is perhaps even more unsettling than Alec's outward and self-conscious cruelty.

Even Angel's love for Tess, as pure and gentle as it seems, dominates her in an unhealthy way. Angel substitutes an idealized picture of Tess's country purity for the real-life woman that he continually refuses to get to know. When Angel calls Tess names like "Daughter of Nature" and "Artemis," we feel that he may be denying her true self in favor of a mental image that he prefers. Thus, her identity and experiences are suppressed, albeit unknowingly. This pattern of male domination is finally reversed with Tess's murder of Alec, in which, for the first time in the novel, a woman takes active steps against a man. Of course, this act only leads to even greater suppression of a woman by men, when the crowd of male police officers arrest Tess at Stonehenge. Nevertheless, for just a moment, the

accepted pattern of submissive women bowing to dominant men is interrupted, and Tess's act seems heroic.

## Character Map



## Glossary

**Aeschylean phrase** "President of the Immortals" translates a phrase from Prometheus Bound (1.169), by Aeschylus; Hardy finishes the novel by suggesting that the highest power in the universe uses human beings for "sport."

**Aholah and Aholibah** two sisters who were prostitutes: Ezekiel predicts that not only they but their children will be punished (Ezekiel 23).

**Aldebaran or Sirius** two of the brightest stars in the sky.

**almanack** (dialect) almanac.

**And she shall follow after her lover . . .** from Hosea 2:7.

**Antinomian** a believer in the Christian doctrine that faith alone, not obedience to the moral law, is necessary for salvation.

**antiquity** the quality of being ancient or old.

**Apostolic Charity** Charity as described by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

**apostrophizing** addressing words to a person or thing, whether absent or present, generally in an exclamatory digression in a speech or literary writing.

**apple-booth** apple blossom.

**Artemis, Demeter** goddesses associated with chastity, but the former also connected with hunting and both understood in the early anthropology of Hardy's time as fertility goddesses.

**Article Four** the fourth of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England asserts the literal resurrection of Christ from the dead.

**as Hamlet puts it** from Hamlet 2.2.351.

**Atalanta's race** Atalanta was a Grecian huntress who refused to marry any suitor who could not outrun her; the penalty for those who lost was death.

**autochthonous** characteristic of any of the earliest known inhabitants of a place.

**Babylon** ancient city noted for wealth, luxury, and wickedness.

**Bachelor-apostle** St. Paul; Alec is echoing Luke 9:62.

**baily** in England, a steward or manager of a farm or estate.

**Ballyragging** bullying, intimidating, or browbeating.

**banns** the proclamation, generally made in church on three successive Sundays, of an intended marriage.

**barton** barnyard.

**beatific** making blissful or blessed.

**Being reviled we bless** □ 1 Corinthians 4:12-13.

**bizarrie** something strange, weird, singular, odd (French).

**black-puddings** dark sausages made with meat and seasoned blood.

**cadaverous** of or like a cadaver; esp., pale, ghastly, or gaunt and haggard.

**Calvinistic doctrine** reference to the teachings of John Calvin (1509-1564), Swiss Protestant theologian, who emphasized salvation through God's grace.

**capricious** subject to caprices; tending to change abruptly and without apparent reason; erratic; flighty.

**carking** [Archaic] worrying or being worried or anxious.

**Caroline date** the seventeenth century, during the reign of Charles I (reigned 1625-49) or Charles II (reigned 1660-85).

**Centurions** the commanding officers of an ancient Roman century.

**Cerealialia** celebration in honor of Ceres, Roman goddess of the harvest.

**Champaigns** plains; level open country.

**Chapels-of-Ease** chapels for parishioners who lived far from the church.

**éclat** brilliant or conspicuous success; dazzling display.

**clipsed or colled** (dialect) embraced.

**clipsing and colling** hugging (dialect).

**Clogged like a dripping pan** reference to a pan, used for roasting, in which the drippings of fat have been allowed to congeal.

**Conjecturally** being inferred, theorized, or predicted from incomplete or uncertain evidence.

**contravene** to go against; oppose; conflict with; violate; to disagree with in argument; contradict.

**convenances** social conventions (from French).

**copy-holders** people who hold land by copyhold.



**copyholders** persons who hold land by copyhold; here, possessors of the land at the will of the lord of the manor, who, by custom, normally allowed tenants to stay for longer than the life of the original tenant.

**Cornelia** wife of Scipio Africanus the Younger (second cen. B.C.), who devoted herself to raising her twelve children and refused offers of marriage after she was widowed (*Enc. Britannica*, 7:167).

**cowcumber** (dialect) cucumber.

**Crivelli's dead *Christus*** probably the Pietà by the fifteenth-century Italian painter, Carlo Crivelli (c. 1430-1495), in the National Gallery in London.

**crumby** an attractive girl.

**Cubit's** Cupid's.

**cumbrous** cumbersome.

**Cybele the Many-breasted** Phrygian fertility goddess who, in the form of a mother with many breasts, symbolizes nature.

**Cyprian image** the goddess of love in an ancient world, Venus and Aphrodite, was associated with Cyprus, but the legend mentioned has not been convincingly identified.

**dand** (dialect) a bit more.

**dandyism** the condition of being or qualities of a dandy, a man who pays too much attention to his clothes and appearance.

**Dapes inemptae** "unpurchased banquet" (Latin); refers to the dairyman's self-sufficiency in producing food.

**Deal box** a fir or pine board of any of several sizes; fir or pinewood.

**deferential** very respectful.

**delirium tremens** violent delirium resulting chiefly from excessive drinking of alcoholic liquor and characterized by sweating, trembling, anxiety, and frightening hallucinations.

**Deparked** removed from their status as a park, that is, an area preserved for hunting by the aristocracy through royal decree.

**deprecated** expressed disapproval of; depreciated; belittled.

**desultory** passing from one thing to another in an aimless way; disconnected; not methodical.

**diment** diamond (dialect).

**dimity** a thin, corded or patterned cotton cloth.

**dolorifuge** (archaic usage) painful, full of sorrow.

**Druidical mistletoe** to the Druids, mistletoe was sacred.

**dust and ashes** Job 42:6.

**dust to ashes** from Job 42:6.

**dusty death** a phrase from *Macbeth* 5.5.23.

**early Italian conception of the two Marys`** because of their weepings and pensive looks, they resemble painted representations from the Renaissance of Mary, the mother of Christ, and Mary Magdalen after the death of Jesus.

**enervating** depriving of strength, force, vigor, etc.; weakening physically, mentally, or morally.

**Equinoctial** occurring at or about the time of an equinox.

**Ethiopic** hot, African-like scorching of the farmland and pasture.

**exaction** an excessive demand; extortion; an exacted fee, tax.

**expostulate** to reason with a person earnestly, objecting to that person's actions or intentions; remonstrate (*with*).

**Faeces** feces, excrement.

**fagged** to have worked hard and become very tired; [Brit. Informal] to have served as a servant.

**fancy-man** .a man supported by a woman; esp., a pimp; here, a sweetheart (slang).

**Faustina** wife of Roman Emperor and philosopher Marcus Aurelius, she was reputed to be unfaithful.

**Felloes** rims of a spoked wheel, or segments of the rim.

**fess** pleased (dialect).

**fiat** an order issued by legal authority, usually beginning with fiat (let it be done); decree.

**flummery** meaningless flattery or silly talk.

**Friar Lawrence** from *Romeo and Juliet* (Act II, Scene 6, Line 9).

**from St. Luke** refers to Luke 12:20.

**from the *Dictionnaire Philosophique* to Huxley's *Essays*** The *Dictionnaire* is a collection of essays published in the eighteenth century by Voltaire, who was antagonistic to Christianity; Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), a respected

scientist and supporter of Darwinian theory, published many essays, including *Essays on Some Controverted Questions* (1892).

**gaffer** a foreman of a group of workers.

**Giotto's 'Two Apostles'** Hardy probably had in mind the fresco in the National Gallery in London that is now attributed to Spinello Aretino (active 1371-1410).

**Gnomic texts** gnomic means wise and pithy; full of aphorisms; here, a reference to texts that express general truths in a wise manner.

**a good thing could come out of Nazareth** John 1:46.

**Good-hussif** (dialect) good housewife.

**grapes of Ephraim** from Judges 8:1-3.

**green malt on the floor** the expression refers to pregnancy before marriage.

**guindée** stiff, stilted, formal (French).

**habiliments** clothing; dress; attire.

**haggler/higgler** a dealer who travels from place to place selling wares or goods, such as fruit.

**Hagrode** (dialect) ridden by witches, troubled by nightmares.

**handkercher** (dialect) handkerchief.

**Heliolatries** religions in which the sun is worshipped.

**her Antinous** . . . a favorite of the Roman Emperor Hadrian; like Apollo, the Greek god of sun and of music, Antinous was a figure of male beauty.

**her mother's ballad of the mystic robe** from "The Boy and the Mantle," in which a robe betrays Queen Guenever, the wife of King Arthur.

**Hodge** a familiar term for an agricultural laborer in England; shortened form of Roger.

**hogshead** a large barrel or cask holding from 63 to 140 gallons (238 to 530 liters)

**Holmberry** a holly bush.

**Hontish** (dialect) haughty.

**How are the mighty fallen** from 2 Samuel 1:19.

**Hymenaeus and Alexander** in this sentence Alec is echoing Paul in 1 Timothy 1:18-20, where he mentions these figures as examples of those who have lost faith.

**I worshipped on the mountains . . .** from 2 Kings 17-23.

**impressibility** the state of being impressed or impressionable.

**Integer Vitae** phrase from Roman poet Horace is in an ode translated in the lines quoted as "upright life."

**integument** a natural outer covering of the body or of a plant, including skin, shell, hide, husk, or rind.

**interlocutor** a person taking part in a conversation or dialogue.

**Ixionian wheel** in Greek mythology, Ixion's eternal punishment was to be bound to a revolving wheel of fire.

**Jeremy Taylor's thought** reference to *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying* (1651) by Jeremy Taylor, a seventeenth-century Anglican divine.

**Jints** (dialect) joints or hip/knee joints.

**kex** (dialect) a dry, hollow plant stem.

**land of Canaan** the Promised Land.

**larry** commotion, disturbance (dialect).

**leads** milk pans made of lead.

**less Byronic than Shelleyan** less passionate than spiritual in inclination.

**license** written permission from a bishop in place of a bans.

**like the moves of a chess player** death is sometimes represented as a chess player.

**limed** caught with birdlime; here, Abraham is compared to a bird ensnared in bird-lime.

**lineaments** the features of the body, usually of the face, esp. with regard to their outlines.

**Liviers** lifeholders, that is, tenants whose lease ran the length of a specified number of lifetimes; by contrast, a freeholder's heirs could retain his lease in perpetuity.

**Lotis . . . Priapus** Priapus, another lustful god, pursued Lotis, who was turned into a lotus flower.

**Lucretia** or Lucrece, wife of Collantius, known for her virtue, who killed herself after being raped by Lucius Tarquinius.

**M. Sully-Prudhomme** French poet and essayist (1839 — 1907).

**Magdalene** Mary Magdalene was a fallen woman. Christ's appearance to her after his Resurrection occurs in Mark 16.

**Malthusian** of Malthus and his theory that the world population tends to increase faster than the food supply with inevitable disastrous results unless natural restrictions, such as war, famine, and disease, reduce the population or the increase is checked by moral restraint.

**Mampus** crowd (dialect).

**man of Uz** Job.

**Marble term** a post that marks the boundary, often in the shape of a pillar topped with a head and torso.

**Market-niche** the amount of alcohol that he would normally drink on a market day.

**mien** a way of carrying and conducting oneself; manner.

**milchers** animals that give milk.

**mistarshers** (dialect) mustache.

**mommet** (dialect) a term of abuse or contempt.

**Mommet** a term of abuse or contempt (dialect).

**My soul chooseth strangling** . . . Job 7:15-16.

**nammet-time** (dialect) time for a snack at mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

**nater** nature (dialect).

**Nature's holy plan** from Wordsworth, "Lines Written in Early Spring" (line 22).

**Nazarene** Jesus, from John 14:27.

**niaseries** nonsense, foolish thought (from French).

**night-rail** a loose dressing-jacket or dressing gown.

**nott cows** (dialect) cows without horns.

**nymphs** minor nature goddesses, represented as young and beautiful and living in rivers, mountains, or trees.

**O foolish Galatians** . . . from Galatians 3:1.

**off-license** without a license; here, Rolliver's is not licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises.



**old double chant 'Langdon'** a chant in the Anglican Church double the normal length, in this case named after the English composer, Robert Langdon (1730-1803).

**Old Lady Day** April 6, date used to set the beginning or ending of employment.

**Old Style days** the time before 1752 when Great Britain replaced the Julian Calendar, old-style dating, with Gregorian, or new-style dating.

**Oliver Grumble's** Oliver Cromwell['s].

**Olympian shapes** the shapes of the Greek gods, who lived on Mount Olympus.

**one deserving to be stoned** from John 8:3-11, instead of encouraging stoning, Jesus forgives a woman brought to him as an adulteress by the Scribes and Pharisees.

**Ostium sepulchri** . . . Door of the tomb of the ancient family of d'Urberville (Latin).

**ostler** (dialect) hosteler.

**outhouse** a building separate from but near a main building. In nineteenth-century British usage, outhouse probably does not refer to a privy.

**Pagan Moralist** Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (121-180 A.D.), Roman emperor and stoic philosopher.

**Pan** Greek god with legs, ears, and horns of a goat, noted for his lust.

**pantheistic** relating to pantheism, the doctrine that God is not a personality, but that all laws, forces, manifestations, etc. of the universe are God; the belief that God and the universe are one and the same.

**parlous** perilous; dangerous; risky.

**Partie carree** party of four, from French.

**Pattens** elevated, wooden soled shoes, often used for walking in mud and sometimes outfitted with an iron ring that can clink.

**pellucid** transparent or translucent; clear; easy to understand.

**penitential** expressing penitence for having sinned or done other wrong and willing to atone.

**penury** lack of money, property, or necessities; extreme poverty; destitution.

**percipience** a perceiving, esp. keenly or readily.

**perdition** the loss of the soul; damnation; hell.

**pernicious** causing great injury, destruction, or ruin; fatal; deadly; [Rare] wicked; evil.

**Peter the Great** Peter I (1672-1725); czar of Russia (1682-1725). Before becoming Emperor of Russia, Peter studied shipbuilding.

**Petite mort** shudder or chill; a premonition of death; a "little death" (French).

**phlegmatic** hard to rouse to action; sluggish; dull; apathetic; calm; cool; stolid.

**phlegmatic** hard to rouse to action; specif., sluggish; dull; apathetic; calm; cool; stolid.

**Phryne** Athenian courtesan who was the model and lover of Praxiteles, the sculptor.

**pillar of a cloud** from Exodus 13:21.

**pinner** (dialect) a pinafore or apron with a bib.

**plim** swell (dialect).

**Plutonic master** Pluto, or Hades, god of the underworld, had the power to condemn people to hell.

**pollarded for bows** had their boughs severed to make bows.

**poppet** [Obs.] a doll, or puppet.

**Praxitlean creation** like the work of Praxiteles, Greek sculptor of the fourth century B.C. known for his sensual statues.

**premonitory** giving previous warning or notice.

**pricked or ducked** references to ordeals used to identify witches, either by pricking them to see if they were insensitive or bled less than normal, or by ducking them to see if they sank (a sign of innocence) or floated (a sign of guilt).

**Primum mobile** the outermost sphere of the world in Ptolemaic cosmography, which caused the movement of the heavens (Latin).

**proclivity** a natural or habitual tendency or inclination, esp. toward something discreditable.

**prophet on the top of Peor** Balaam, who refused to curse the Israelites, Numbers 23-24.

**prophet's gourd** from Jonah 4:5-10, a gourd springs up overnight to give shade to Jonah.

**propinquity** nearness in time or place.

**prudish** like or characteristic of a prude; too modest or proper.

**psalter** a version of the Psalms for use in religious services; here, Tess is thinking of the psalm that is part of the "Invitatory and Psalter" of the Daily Morning Prayer in *The Book of Common Prayer*.

**publican** in Britain, any owner or proprietor of a pub.

**Publicans and Sinners . . . Scribes and Pharisees** they were biased in favor of those who had fallen.

**pummy** ground apples used in making cider.

**quadrille** a square dance of French origin, consisting of several figures, performed by four couples.

**quagmire** a difficult or inextricable position; here, referring to the difficulties caused by the loss of Prince, the Durbeyfield horse.

**Queen of Sheba** queen who visited King Solomon to investigate his reputed wisdom: 1 Kings 10:1-13; here, a reference to the Queen's dispirited feeling after she experiences the wisdom and wealth of Solomon (1 Kings 10:3-5).

**rafted** disturbed, unsettled (dialect).

**reconnoitre** to make a reconnaissance; alternate spelling of reconnoiter.

**redemptive theolatriy** the worship of a god that promises redemption, as in Christianity.

**reed-drawing** preparing straw to be used as thatching material.

**Revised Code** reference to the Education Department's Revised Codes of 1862 and 1867, which linked the funding for schools to their size and to student performance on standardized assessment examinations.

**Robert South** English divine and minister (1634-1716).

**satyrs** in classical mythology, minor woodland deities having the head and trunk of a man and the hind legs of a goat, and as being fond of riotous merriment and lechery.

**self-immolation** suicide, usually by burning oneself in a public place; deliberate self-sacrifice.

**Sermon on the Mount** from Matthew 5-7.

**servants of corruption** from 2 Peter 2:19-20.

**the seven thunders** from Revelation 10:3-4.

**shine on the just and the unjust alike** an echo of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:45).

**Sigh gratis** act or feel without expecting reward; from Hamlet (Act II, Scene 2, Line 323).

**Sileni** plural form of Silenus, a satyr and follower of Bacchus.

**sin, the world and the devil** a reference to "the world, the flesh, and the devil," traditional temptations to sin mentioned in *The Book of Common Prayer* (Anglican Church).

**Sins of the fathers** Exodus 20:5: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."

**Sixth Standard in the National School** the highest level available in school supported by government funds run by the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. The first schools were established in 1811.

**Skein** a quantity of thread or yarn wound in a coil; something like this, as a coil of hair.

**some mutely Miltonic, some potentially Cromwellian** an allusion to Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (lines 59-60).

**somnambulistic** getting up and moving about in a trance-like state while asleep.

**springe** [Now Rare] a snare consisting of a noose attached to something under tension, as a bent tree branch.

**Stale** (dialect) to urinate.

**stave** a set of verses, or lines, of a song or poem; stanza.

**stile** a vertical piece in a panel or frame, as of a door or window.

**Stodded waggon** (dialect) a wagon that is stuck.

**Stopt-diapason note** suggests Tess' voice, which, like an organ with stops, or tuned sets of pipes, is characterized by a full range of harmonious sound.

**a stranger in a strange land** in Exodus 2:22, Moses in Egypt refers to himself as a stranger in a strange land.

**Stubbard-tree** a kind of apple tree.

**Stupefaction** stunned amazement or utter bewilderment.

**summut** (dialect) somewhat.

**sumple** supple (dialect).

**Superincumbent** lying or resting on something else.

**supernumerary** that exceeds or is beyond the regular or prescribed number; extra.

**supervened** came or happened as something extraneous or unexpected; to take place; ensued.

**swede-hacking** a swede is a Swedish turnip, or rutabaga.

**Syrinx** Syrinx was pursued by Pan, but the gods turned her into a reed, from which Pan made his pipe.

**taciturnity** the condition of being silent or uncommunicative.

**Take, O take those lips away** from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (Act I, Scene 1, Line 1).

**tale told by an idiot** from *Macbeth* 5.5.26-27.

**teave** (dialect) work or struggle.

**Temple of the Winds** also known as the "tower of the winds," a temple in Athens used for telling time.

**texes** (dialect) texts.

**that scene of Milton's** scene from *Paradise Lost*, and the passage quoted (Book IX:626-631) is spoken by Eve to Satan in the form of a serpent.

**Thermidorean weather** here, warm summer months; Thermidor is a reference to the month from July 19 to August 17 in the French calendar, instituted in 1793 after the Revolution.

**thimble-riggers** cheaters or swindlers.

**thirtover** (dialect) thwart-over, meaning perverse.

**those who are true** □ list of virtues comes from Paul; Philippians 4:8.

**thought of Pascal's** translated it means: "To the same degree as one has intelligence, one notices that many individuals possess distinctive qualities. People of an ordinary kind do not notice the differences between individuals." From the *Pensees* of Blaise Pascal (1602-1674), French philosopher and mathematician.

**Tishbite** Elijah, who in 1 Kings 18 mocks the god worshipped by the priests of Baal.

**to take Orders** to become an ordained minister.

**Tole** (dialect) to entice.



**Tophet** a place mentioned in the Bible where children were burned; it became identified in Judaism with an underworld where wickedness was punished after death; a synonym for hell that came into Middle English from Hebrew.

**Touchwood** dried, decayed wood or dried fungus used as tinder.

**Traceried** having ornamental work of interlacing or branching lines, as in a Gothic window, some kinds of embroidery, etc.

**Tractarian** derived from the Oxford Movement, which favored a return to early Catholic doctrines in the Church of England.

**transters** (dialect) carriers; hawkers.

**treacle** molasses.

**trencher-woman** a woman who eats much and heartily

**Trilithon** a monument consisting of two upright megaliths with a third stone serving as the lintel.

**Tuscan saint** a reference to the images typical of Florentine art during the Renaissance.

**The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife . . .** in 1 Corinthians, 7:13-14, Paul advises wives not to leave husbands who lack belief.

**Uncribbed, uncabined** after murdering Banquo, in *Macbeth* (3.4.24-25), Macbeth refers to himself as "cabined, cribbed, confined."

**Valley of Humiliation** from Part I (1678) and Part II (1684) of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

**vamp** trudge, tramp, walk (dialect).

**van Alsoot or Sallaert** Seventeenth century Flemish painters of village life.

**Van Beers** Jan Van Beers (1852-1927), Flemish painter frequently compared to Wiertz.

**van** common carrier, usually a cart pulled by horses, which travels from town to town.

**vicissitudes** unpredictable changes or variations that keep occurring in life, fortune, etc.; shifting circumstances; ups and downs.

**vlee** fly; a one-horse hackney-carriage (dialect).

**Vulpine slyness** of or like a fox or foxes; clever, cunning.

**Weltlust** desire for worldly things and pleasures (German).

**which alters when it alteration finds** from Shakespeare's Sonnet 116.

**Whickered** (dialect) snickered, giggled, tittered.

**white pillar of a cloud** from Exodus 13:21.

**Whitsun Holidays** the time around the seventh Sunday after Easter, Whitsuntide or Whit Sunday. Club-walking and other festivities were held in parishes at Whitsuntide.

**wicket** a small door or gate, esp. one set in or near a larger door or gate.

**Wiertz Museum** museum in Brussels containing the macabre works of the Flemish painter Antoine Wiertz (1806-1865).

**wife of Uriah** Bathsheba, whom King David committed adultery with and then married after sending Uriah to his death on battle, from 2 Samuel 11.

**witch of Babylon** from Revelation 17, there are references to the Whore of Babylon.

**Withy-bed** stand of willows.

**wold** old (dialect).

**Women's club-walking** A procession by the members of a local club or clubs: esp. the annual festival of a benefit club or friendly society.

**the world, the flesh, nor the devil** traditional temptations to sin mentioned in The Book of Common Prayer.

**the wrath to come** an echo of Matthew 3:7.

**wrings** cheese processes.

**wroppers** (dialect) wrappers.

## Adaptations

### Theatre

The novel was adapted for the stage in 1897. The production by Lorimer Stoddard proved a Broadway triumph for actress Minnie Maddern Fiske when it opened on 2 March 1897. A copyright performance was given at St James's Theatre in London on the same date. It was revived in America in 1902 and then made into a motion picture by Adolph Zukor in 1913, starring Mrs. Fiske; no copies remain.

In the UK, an adaptation, *Tess*, by H. Mountford, opened at the Grand Theatre in Blackpool on 5 January 1900.

*Tess*, a different stage adaptation by H. A. Kennedy, premièred at the Coronet Theatre in London's Notting Hill Gate on 19 February 1900. Mrs Lewis Waller (Florence West) played the title role, with William Kettridge as Angel Clare and Whitworth Jones as Alec Tantridge. The play transferred to

the Comedy Theatre for 17 performances from 14 April 1900 with a slightly different cast, including Fred Terry as Alec and Oswald Yorke as Angel.

In 1924, Hardy wrote a British theatrical adaptation and chose Gertrude Bugler, a Dorchester girl from the original Hardy Players to play Tess. The Hardy Players (re-formed in 2005) was an amateur group from Dorchester that re-enacted Hardy's novels. Bugler was acclaimed, but prevented from taking the London stage part by the jealousy of Hardy's wife Florence; Hardy had said that young Gertrude was the true incarnation of the Tess he had imagined. Years before writing the novel, Hardy had been inspired by the beauty of her mother Augusta Way, then an 18-year-old milkmaid, when he visited Augusta's father's farm in Bockhampton. When Hardy saw Bugler (he rehearsed The Hardy Players at the hotel run by her parents), he immediately recognised her as a young image of the now older Augusta.

The novel was successfully adapted for the stage several more times:

- 1946: An adaptation by playwright Ronald Gow became a triumph on the West End starring Wendy Hiller.
- 1999: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, a new West End musical with music by Stephen Edwards and lyrics by Justin Fleming opens in London at the Savoy Theatre.
- 2007: *Tess, The New Musical* (a rock opera) with lyrics, music and libretto by Annie Pasqua and Jenna Pasqua premières in New York City.
- 2009: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, a new stage adaptation with five actors was produced in London by Myriad Theatre & Film.
- 2010: *Tess*, a new rock opera, is an official Next Link Selection at the New York Musical Theatre Festival with music, lyrics, and libretto by Annie Pasqua and Jenna Pasqua.
- 2011: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, adapted from the original 1924 script by Devina Symes for Norrie Woodhall, the last surviving member of Hardy's theatrical group, the Hardy Players. Three extra scenes were included at Woodhall's request, including the final one, staged as Woodhall described it from her own appearance in Hardy's original adaptation: "Tess, accompanied by Angel Clare, is arrested by a phalanx of constables for the murder of her other suitor Alec d'Urberville at sunrise, after a night spent within the bluestone towers of a lonely henge on the bleak and wind swept expanse of Salisbury Plain."
- 2012: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was produced into a piece of musical theatre by Youth Music Theatre UK as part of their summer season, and further developed, edited and performed in 2017 at the Theatre Royal, Winchester, and The Other Palace, London in 2018.
- 2019: *Tess - The Musical*, a new British musical by composer Michael Blore and playwright Michael Davies, received a workshop production at The Other Place, the Royal Shakespeare Company's studio theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, in February 2019.

## Opera

1906: An Italian operatic version written by Frederic d'Erlanger was first performed in Naples, but the run was cut short by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. When the opera came to London three years later, Hardy, then 69, attended the premiere.

## Film and television

The story has also been filmed at least eight times, including three for general release through cinemas and four television productions.

### • Cinema:

- 1913: The "lost" silent version, mentioned under Theatre, starring Minnie Maddern Fiske as Tess and Scots-born David Torrence as Alec.
- 1924: Another lost silent version was made with Blanche Sweet (Tess), Stuart Holmes (Alec), and Conrad Nagel (Angel).
- 1944: *Man Ki Jeet*, Indian Hindi-language film adaptation directed by W. Z. Ahmed.
- 1967: *Dulhan Ek Raat Ki*, Indian Hindi-language film starring Nutan, Dharmendra and Rehman.
- 1979: Roman Polanski's film *Tess* with Nastassja Kinski (Tess), Leigh Lawson (Alec), and Peter Firth (Angel).
- 1996: *Prem Granth*, Indian Hindi-language film adaptation directed by Rajiv Kapoor - starring Rishi Kapoor and Madhuri Dixit in the lead roles.
- 2000: *Nishiddha Nodi* is an Indian Assamese-language film by Bidyut Chakrabarty, based on the novel, produced by the Assam State Film (Finance and Development) Corporation and released on 18 February 2000.
- 2011: Michael Winterbottom 21st-century Indian set film *Trishna* with Freida Pinto and Riz Ahmed.
- 2013: *The Maiden* 21st century set film starring Brittany Ashworth, Matt Maltby and Jonah Hauer-King, directed by Daisy Bard, written and produced by Jessica Benhamou.

### Television:

- 1952: BBC TV, directed by Michael Henderson, and starring Barbara Jefford (Tess), Michael Aldridge (Alec), and Donald Eccles (Angel).
- 1960: ITV, *ITV Play of the Week*, "Tess", directed by Michael Currer-Briggs, and starring Geraldine McEwan (Tess), Maurice Kaufmann (Alec), and Jeremy Brett (Angel).
- 1998: London Weekend Television's three-hour mini-series *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, directed by Ian Sharp, and starring Justine Waddell (Tess), Jason Flemyng (Alec), and Oliver Milburn (Angel), the latter Dorset-born.
- 2008: A four-hour BBC adaptation, written by David Nicholls, aired in the United Kingdom in September and October 2008 in four parts, and in the

United States on the PBS series *Masterpiece Classic* in January 2009 in two parts. The cast included Gemma Arterton (Tess), Hans Matheson (Alec), Eddie Redmayne (Angel), Ruth Jones (Joan), Anna Massey (Mrs d'Urberville), and Kenneth Cranham (Reverend James Clare).

- 2020: The BBC Radio 4 series "Hardy's Women" featured a three-part adaptation of the novel from Tess's perspective.

## Tess of the d'Urbervilles FILM

[a] Please visit the web link to watch the Film [2 hrs : 55 min] [1998]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZQzdjPQiyY&ab\\_channel=LoveLives](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZQzdjPQiyY&ab_channel=LoveLives)

[b] Please visit the web link to watch the Film [2 hrs : 52 min] [1979]

<https://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/92614/tess/#overview>

**Tess** is a 1979 drama film directed by Roman Polanski and starring Nastassja Kinski, Peter Firth, and Leigh Lawson. It is an adaptation of Thomas Hardy's 1891 novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.<sup>[4]</sup> The screenplay was written by Gérard Brach, John Brownjohn, and Roman Polanski. The film received positive critical reviews upon release and was nominated for six Academy Awards, including Best Picture, winning three for Best Cinematography, Best Art Direction and Best Costume Design.

## Cast

- [Nastassja Kinski](#) as Tess Durbeyfield (listed as "Nastassia Kinski")
- [Peter Firth](#) as Angel Clare
- [Leigh Lawson](#) as Alec Stokes-d'Urberville
- [John Collin](#) as John Durbeyfield
- [Rosemary Martin](#) as Mrs. Durbeyfield
- [Carolyn Pickles](#) as Marian
- [Richard Pearson](#) as Vicar of Marlott
- [David Markham](#) as Reverend Clare
- [Pascale de Boysson](#) as Mrs. Clare
- [Suzanna Hamilton](#) as Izz Huett
- Caroline Embling as Retty
- [Tony Church](#) as Parson Tringham
- [Sylvia Coleridge](#) as Mrs. d'Urberville
- Fred Bryant as Dairyman Crick
- [Tom Chadbon](#) as Cuthbert Clare
- [Arielle Dombasle](#) as Mercy Chant
- [Dicken Ashworth](#) as Farmer Groby
- [Lesley Dunlop](#) as Girl in henhouse

## Awards

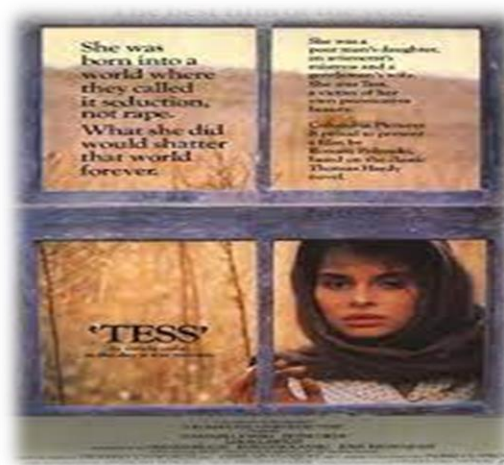
*Tess* was nominated for six awards, including Best Picture, at the 53rd Academy Awards and won three. It was also nominated for four Golden Globe Awards (winning two), three British Academy Film Awards (winning one) and six César Awards (winning three).

Award	Category	Recipients	Result
53rd Academy Awards	Best Picture	Claude Berri	Nominated
	Best Director	Roman Polanski	Nominated
	Best Art Direction	Pierre Guffroy and Jack Stephens	Won
	Best Cinematography	Geoffrey Unsworth and Ghislain Cloquet	Won
	Best Costume Design	Anthony Powell	Won
	Best Original Score	Philippe Sarde	Nominated
35th BAFTA Film Awards	Best Cinematography	Geoffrey Unsworth and Ghislain Cloquet	Won
	Best Production Design	Pierre Guffroy	Nominated
	Best Costume Design	Anthony Powell	Nominated
5th César Awards	Best Film	Roman Polanski	Won
	Best Director	Roman Polanski	Won
	Best Cinematography	Ghislain Cloquet	Won
	Best Actress	Nastassja Kinski	Nominated



Award	Category	Recipients	Result
	Best Production Design	Pierre Guffroy	Nominated
	Best Music Written for a Film	Philippe Sarde	Nominated
38th Golden Globe Awards	Best Director – Motion Picture	Roman Polanski	Nominated
	<u>Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama</u>	Nastassja Kinski	Nominated
	Best Foreign Film	France	Won
	New Star of the Year – Female	Nastassja Kinski	Won

### Some selected Scenes from the Film





# Annotated Webliography

[1]

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/tess/>

Providing the detailed chapter-by-chapter Summary & Analysis, the Full Book Summary of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, a list of characters and their analysis, theme of the novel, literary devices, important quotations with their explanations, quizzes on every chapters and characters , overview of the plot, mini essays and suggested essay topics.

[2]

<https://www.cliffsnotes.com/literature/t/tess-of-the-durbervilles/book-summary>

Containing book summary, Summary and analysis, characters and their analysis, character map, biography of Hardy, Critical essays, Hardy's use of setting, Hardy on religion, Hardy's comparisons, critical essays, Full Glossary, Practical Projects.

[3]

<https://www.bl.uk/works/tess-of-the-durbervilles>

Provides important information about the novel, other related items with web links, connected articles.

[4]

<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/tess-of-the-d-urbervilles/summary>

Containing the plot summary, characters and their analysis, literary genre, literary devices, characters and their analysis, themes of the novel, summary and analysis of he chapters, interactive theme wheel.

[5]

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/tess-durbervilles>

Providing historical overview, sources, criticism, themes, plot summary, characters and their analysis, themes, style, criticism, sources.

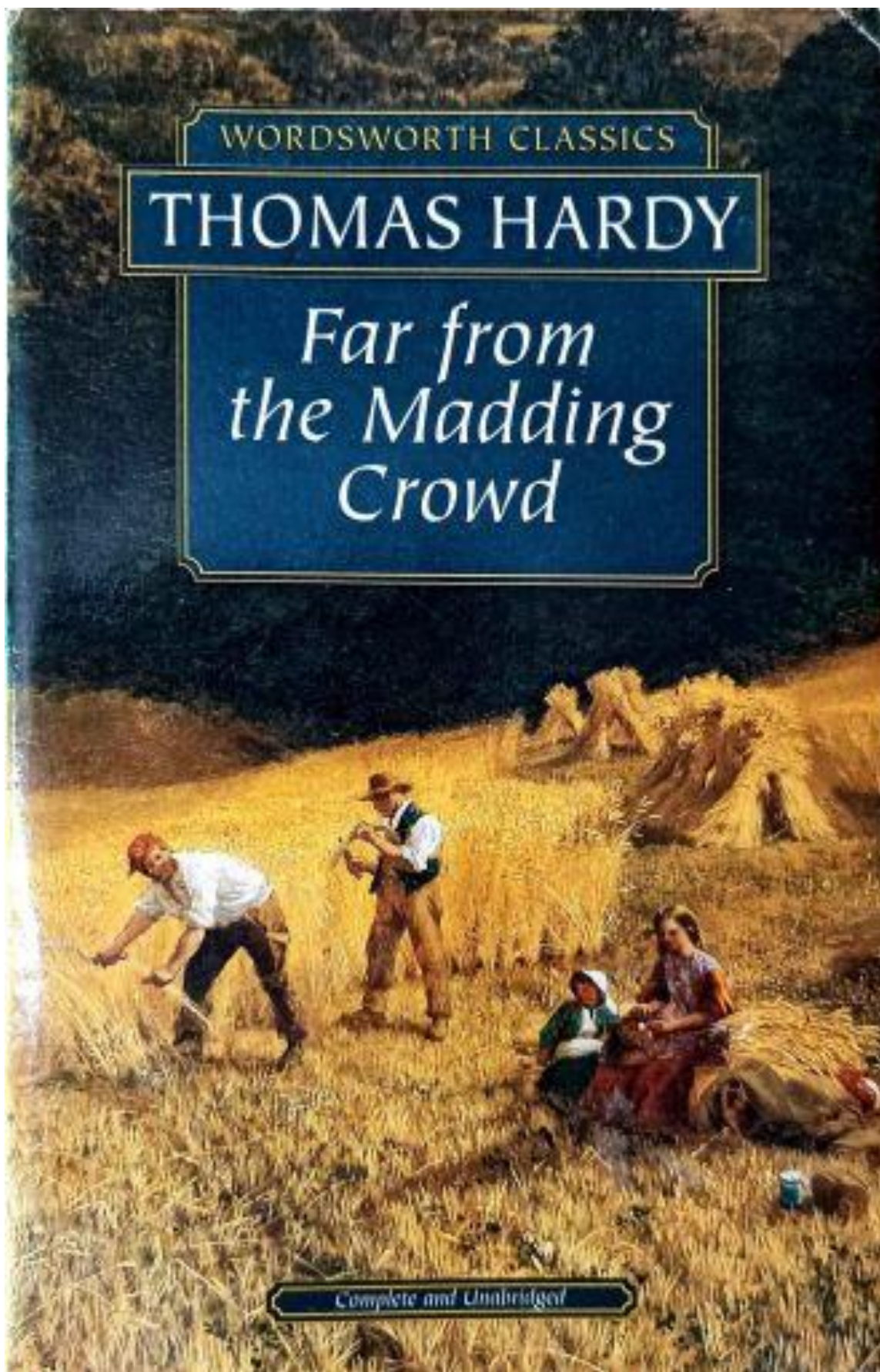




WORDSWORTH CLASSICS

THOMAS HARDY

*Far from  
the Madding  
Crowd*



Complete and Unabridged

# Far from the Madding Crowd

Thomas Hardy

Far from the Madding Crowd is Thomas Hardy's fourth novel, originally published in 1874 as a serial for Cornhill Magazine. Hardy was a Victorian poet and novelist writing in the Realist tradition.

The novel is the first to be set in Hardy's Wessex, a fictitious region of England modelled after his own Dorset and named after the early Saxon kingdom in the same region.

Like much of Hardy's work, the novel explores rural, Victorian-era English society and counters its traditional, idyllic portrayal with a rougher, more complicated depiction. The novel was well received. It has been adapted many times for radio, stage, and screen, including a 2015 film adaptation starring Carey Mulligan and Michael Sheen.

## Plot Summary

The novel begins in the town of Norcombe, where Gabriel Oak is a young farmer. One day, he makes the acquaintance of Bathsheba Everdene, who is staying with her aunt nearby, when she saves him from accidental suffocation. He quickly falls in love and asks her to marry him; however, she rejects his proposal and soon moves away to nearby Weatherbury. Shortly thereafter, Gabriel's sheepdog in training mistakenly drives his entire flock over a cliff, bankrupting Gabriel.

Some months later, he is travelling to look for work when he finds himself in Weatherbury. Spotting a barn on fire, he leaps to work to save it. The barn coincidentally belongs to Bathsheba, who has inherited her uncle's farm. The townspeople, unaware of their history, call for Bathsheba to hire the heroic Gabriel as a shepherd, to which she assents. Gabriel finds lodging and becomes a reliable worker for Bathsheba; their relationship remains professional.

One Valentine's Day, Bathsheba decides to send a valentine in jest to her neighbor, William Boldwood, another wealthy local farmer, because Boldwood never takes notice of her in the markets or in church. Boldwood, a very serious man, believes the valentine to be a true declaration of love and becomes infatuated with Bathsheba. He pursues her until she finally relents and agrees to consider marrying him in five or six weeks if he agrees to leave her alone until then.



In that time, Bathsheba happens to run into Sergeant Troy, a young military man from the area home on leave. Troy is charming and passionate, and when he pursues Bathsheba, despite the warnings of those around her, she falls in love with him. They marry secretly in Bath. Boldwood is distraught and falls into a deep depression, to the point of neglecting his crops, and he loses the majority of his yield to a heavy storm.

Following their marriage, however, Troy becomes more interested in drinking and gambling than settling down, and Bathsheba quickly grows to regret marrying him. Further, Troy still has feelings for an old girlfriend of his. Unbeknownst to Bathsheba, Troy's old lover was [Fanny Robin](#), a former servant of Bathsheba's who mysteriously disappeared. When news arrives, that Fanny has died in a poorhouse in nearby Casterbridge, Bathsheba takes charge of collecting the body and arranging the burial. In the process, she figures out Troy's connection to Fanny, which is confirmed when Troy returns and finds Fanny in the coffin. He tells Bathsheba that he had only ever truly loved Fanny, and that Bathsheba means nothing to him.

After arranging for a headstone for Fanny, Troy walks off toward Budmouth. He goes swimming in a nearby cove and is swept out to sea. The town presumes him dead; Boldwood, reinvigorated, renews his pursuit of Bathsheba, finally convincing her to promise at his Christmas party that she will marry him in six years, once an appropriate amount of time has passed since Troy's disappearance. However, just then, Troy arrives at the party, demanding that Bathsheba leave with him. When Troy becomes rough with Bathsheba, Boldwood shoots him, then turns himself in. He is eventually sentenced to indefinite imprisonment.

All the while, Gabriel has stood by Bathsheba, serving as her constant and most trusted worker and friend. She comes to realize that she loves him; at the end of the novel, a little more than one year after Troy's death, Gabriel and Bathsheba marry.

## Character List

### **Bathsheba Everdene**

Spirited young mistress of a large farm. The beautiful young woman at the center of the novel, who must choose among three very different suitors. She is the protagonist, propelling the plot through her interaction with her various suitors. At the beginning of the novel, she is penniless, but she quickly inherits and learns to run a farm in Weatherbury, where most of the novel takes place. Her first characteristic that we learn about is her vanity, and Hardy continually shows her to



be rash and impulsive. However, not only is she independent in spirit, she is independent financially; this allows Hardy to use her character to explore the danger that such a woman faces of losing her identity and lifestyle through marriage.

### **Gabriel Oak**

Patient, reliable shepherd; suitor of Bathsheba. The novel's hero, Gabriel Oak is a farmer, shepherd, and bailiff, marked by his humble and honest ways, his exceptional skill with animals and farming, and an unparalleled loyalty. He is Bathsheba's first suitor, later the bailiff on her farm, and finally her husband at the very end of the novel. Gabriel is characterized by an incredible ability to read the natural world and control it without fighting against it. He occupies the position of quiet observer throughout most of the book, yet he knows just when to step in to save Bathsheba and others from catastrophe.

### **Mr. Boldwood**

Gentleman farmer enamored of Bathsheba. Bathsheba's second suitor and the owner of a nearby farm, Boldwood, as his name suggests, is a somewhat wooden, reserved man. He seems unable to fall in love until Bathsheba sends him a valentine on a whim, and suddenly he develops feelings for her. Once he is convinced he loves her, he refuses to give up his pursuit of her, and he is no longer rational. Ultimately, he becomes crazy with obsession, shoots Troy at his Christmas party, and is condemned to death. His sentence is changed to life imprisonment at the last minute.

### **Francis Troy**

Lover and, later, husband of Bathsheba. The novel's antagonist, Troy is a less responsible male equivalent of Bathsheba. He is handsome, vain, young, and irresponsible, though he is capable of love. Early in the novel he is involved with Fanny Robin and gets her pregnant. At first, he plans to marry her, but when they miscommunicate about which church to meet at, he angrily refuses to marry her, and she is ruined. He forgets her and marries the rich, beautiful Bathsheba. Yet when Fanny dies of poverty and exhaustion later in the novel with his child in her arms, he cannot forgive himself.

### **Fanny Robin**

Runaway maid. A young orphaned servant girl at the farm who runs away the night Gabriel arrives, attempts to marry Sergeant Troy, and finally dies giving birth to his child at the poor house in Casterbridge. She is a foil to Bathsheba, showing the fate of women who are not well cared for in this society.

### **Mrs. Hurst**

Bathsheba's aunt.

### **Liddy Smallbury**

Bathsheba's maid.

### Maryann Money

Bathsheba's charwoman.

### Mrs. Coggan

Employed by Bathsheba.

### Cainy Ball

Young under-shepherd to Gabriel. A young boy who works as Gabriel Oak's assistant shepherd on the Everdene farm.

### Benjy Pennyways

Bathsheba's ex-bailiff. The bailiff on Bathsheba's farm who is caught stealing grain and dismissed. He disappears for most of the novel until he recognizes Troy at Greenhill Fair and helps Troy surprise Bathsheba at Boldwood's Christmas party.

## Themes

### i) Marriage

No matter what page you turn to in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, it seems like marriage is always on one of the main characters' minds. First Gabriel wants to marry Bathsheba, then Boldwood does, then Sergeant Troy does, and then Boldwood does again. Fanny Robin wants Troy to make good on his promise to marry her, and then Bathsheba actually does marry Troy. And then she marries Gabriel. It's a freaking marriage three-ring circus. After all, marriage in *Far from the Madding Crowd* is both a question of love and a question of finance. And for farmers in 19th century England—or 21st century anywhere, for that matter—what else is there?

### ii) Religion

*Far from the Madding Crowd* is set in Victorian England, which means that you're going to get a double dose of religion. More specifically, this novel observes the way in which religion shapes people's moral codes. Whenever someone needs to make sense of a difficult situation, they often do so by referring to a passage in the Bible that tells of a similar situation.

One of the funny things you'll find throughout this book, though, is that characters who can't read well are constantly misquoting the Bible, meaning that they take comfort from expressions that aren't in the Bible to begin with. But that doesn't change the fact that these people still find comfort in thinking that they're quoting the Bible.

### iii) Love

First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes a baby in a baby carriage. Or, for poor Fanny Robin: first comes love, then comes a baby, and then comes, um, death in the poorhouse.

And for several characters in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, love and marriage don't have anything at all to do with one another.

Boldwood, for example, doesn't care at all whether Bathsheba loves him, so long as she'll agree to be his wife. Gabriel, on the other hand, wants what is best for Bathsheba no

matter what happens to him in the process. It's pretty easy to say that Gabriel's brand of love is a lot nicer than Boldwood's cold, practical desire to possess the woman he wants... and it's certainly nicer than Troy's amoral psychopath approach to L-U-V.

#### **iv) Class**

Class is a really big deal in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. Certain characters move from one class to another as the story unfolds: Gabriel Oak, for example, starts the book as a farmer with his own land and sheep, but a freak accident plunges him into financial ruin and he needs to take a job as a shepherd. This is depressing to him, both because being broke sucks and because Bathsheba didn't want to marry him when he was just a farmer.

As the novel progresses, you find out more and more how people's opinions and options tend to be determined by what place they occupy on the social ladder. The rich get to have options and opinions and the poor... don't.

#### **v) Drugs & Alcohol**

If one you just skims *Far from the Madding Crowd*, one can easily miss how important a role alcohol plays in its action. But beneath all the nature walks and cute baby sheep is more alcohol than on Mardi Gras weekend.

One can tell that Sergeant Troy is a brute, for example, by the way that he can drink any other man under the table. By contrast, we know that Gabriel Oak is a good, Christian man by the way he tends to stay away from the sauce. There are some poor workmen like Joseph Poorgrass who just can't control themselves when it comes to drink, and for Hardy, this seems to happen out of a combination of addiction and personal weakness. On top of that, though, the plot of this book also calls for moments when people need to be a little more clumsy and dumb than usual, and alcohol is a really good way for a writer to make clumsy and dumb happen.

#### **vi) Pride**

You can't underestimate the role of pride in *Far from the Madding Crowd*, or in any Victorian novel, for that matter. Characters in Hardy novels are constantly looking for ways to satisfy their pride without appearing proud at all. It's all a very intricate social game, where everyone is trying to get the better of one another in the subtlest of ways. At times, though, it makes you want to see someone beaten down by the world until they learn to be humble. And luckily for you, that's something that Hardy loves to provide for his readers. Hardy's characters' favorite meal is humble pie.

#### **vii) Independence**

Bathsheba is keen to express her independence; she knows many people feel she needs a spouse to assist with the farm since she's a woman. When Gabriel proposes, Bathsheba says she only wants to marry for love. She manages her own farm as an independent lady via hard work and intellect. Bathsheba's dream of independence is a delusion, as she's dependent on Gabriel the whole time. If he had abandoned her or refused to support her through situations like poisoned sheep or the harvest supper storm, she may have been devastated.

#### **viii) Deceit**

Deceit is a major issue since dishonest persons cause problems. Bathsheba starts a fatal chain of events by mailing Boldwood a valentine and misrepresenting her sentiments.

Later, Troy constantly tricks Bathsheba. When he returns from America, he disguises his identity at the fair. Deception can be innocuous or severe, but it always has bad effects, proving that honesty and integrity are the keys to a successful existence. Reliability

Gabriel represents reliability. He's always there to help, even when Bathsheba mistreats him. Gabriel's personal and professional dependability are rewarded at the end of the tale. His dedication to the Everdene farm permits him to lease Boldwood's land and hope for farming success. Bathsheba recognises his love and marries him. Gabriel is reliable since he's humble and generous. Boldwood is likewise dedicated to Bathsheba, but he insists on possessing her instead of being willing to love and serve her even if she doesn't return his sentiments.

### **ix) Fate**

While the work addresses moral choices and repercussions, it's evident that not everything is in an individual's control. Many characters appear governed by fate and unable to escape certain situations. Gabriel makes all the proper moves to develop his profession in the beginning of the narrative, but a single occurrence destroys him. Bathsheba moves from impoverished to affluent heiress. Gabriel and Bathsheba and Bathsheba and Troy meet by coincidence. This subject argues that human lives are shaped by factors beyond their control.

### **x) Nature**

Nature is a prominent subject in the story because the plot depends on time, seasons, and farm life. Growing and harvesting crops and sheep reproduction help the protagonists make a living. Gabriel's success as a farmer originates from his ability to stay in sync with nature; other people, like Troy, disregard or abuse nature.

### **xi) Patience**

Patience is rewarded despite being difficult to achieve. Gabriel isn't scared to start afresh and slowly advance his profession. Slowly and carefully doing agricultural tasks maintains their quality and the farm's long-term success. He remains faithful to Bathsheba despite her taking him for granted and falling in love with another guy. Bathsheba is impulsive and lacks patience, but she comes to enjoy a slower pace.

## **Adaptations**

### **Radio**

The novel was adapted by Graham White in 2012 into a three-part series on [BBC Radio 4's \*Classic Serial\*](#). The production was directed by [Jessica Dromgoole](#) and featured Alex Tregear as Bathsheba, [Shaun Dooley](#) as Gabriel, [Toby Jones](#) as Boldwood and [Patrick Kennedy](#) as Troy.

### **Comics**

The novel was adapted by [Posy Simmonds](#) into [Tamara Drewe](#), weekly comic strip that ran from September 2005 to October 2006 in [The Guardian's](#) Review section. The strip, a modern reworking of the novel, was itself adapted into a film, [Tamara Drewe](#) (2010), directed by [Stephen Frears](#).

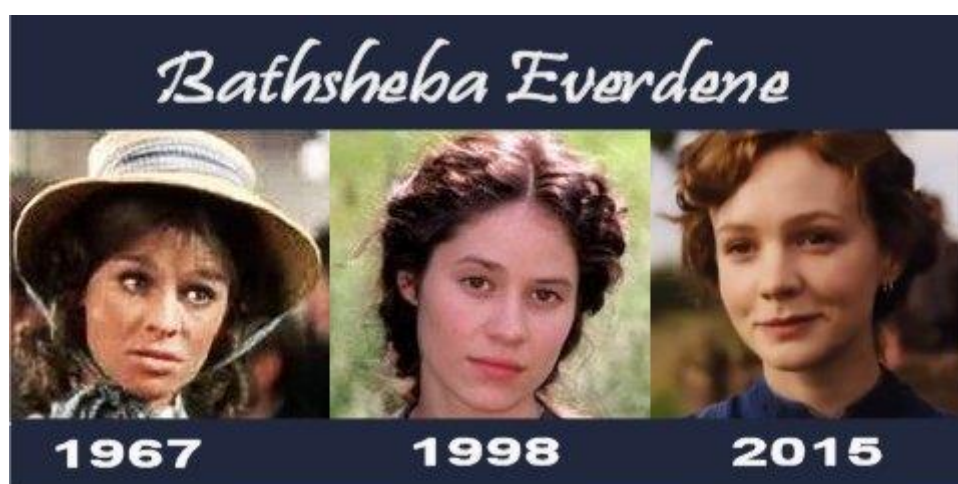
### **Films**

- *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1915) directed by Laurence Trimble, starring Florence Turner and Henry Edwards. This is a lost film.
- *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1967) directed by John Schlesinger, starring Julie Christie as Bathsheba Everdene, Terence Stamp as Sergeant Troy, Peter Finch as Mr Boldwood, and Alan Bates as Farmer Oak.
- *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1998) ITV UK television adaption directed by Nicholas Renton, starring Paloma Baeza, Nathaniel Parker, Jonathan Firth and Nigel Terry.
- *Tamara Drewe* (2010), a British romantic comedy film directed by Stephen Frears and based on the newspaper comic strip of the same name, which was a modern reworking of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, starring Gemma Arterton and Luke Evans as analogues of Bathsheba and Gabriel.
- *Far from the Madding Crowd* (2015) directed by Thomas Vinterberg, screenplay by David Nicholls, with Carey Mulligan as Bathsheba Everdene, Matthias Schoenaerts as Farmer Oak, Michael Sheen as Mr Boldwood, Tom Sturridge as Sergeant Troy and Juno Temple as Fanny Robin.

## *Far from the Madding Crowd* Films

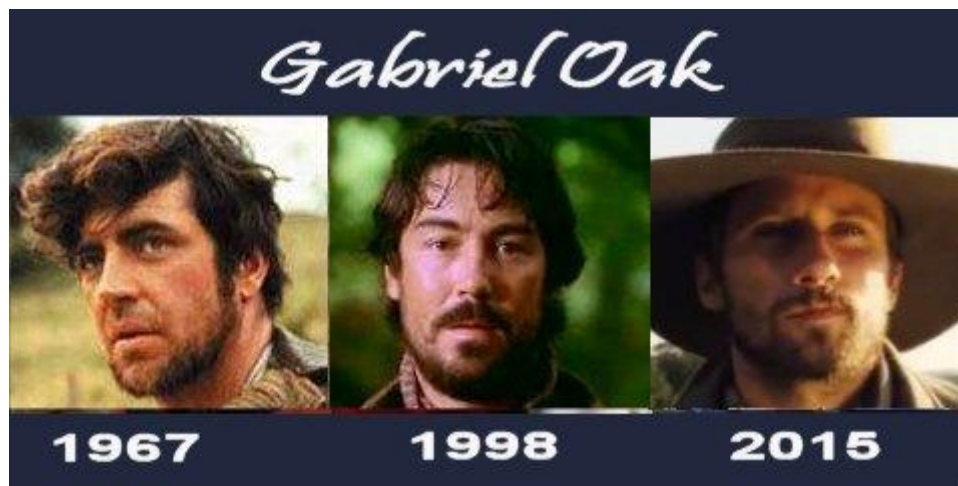
Thomas Hardy's classic novel "Far from the Madding Crowd" has once again been made into a film. Hardy fans know there are two prior versions. The 1967 film won 2 National Board of Review Awards: Best Film and Best Actor (Peter Finch). The 1998 TV movie won a BAFTA for Best Photography and Lighting (John Daly).

There are 4 main characters in "Far from the Madding Crowd."

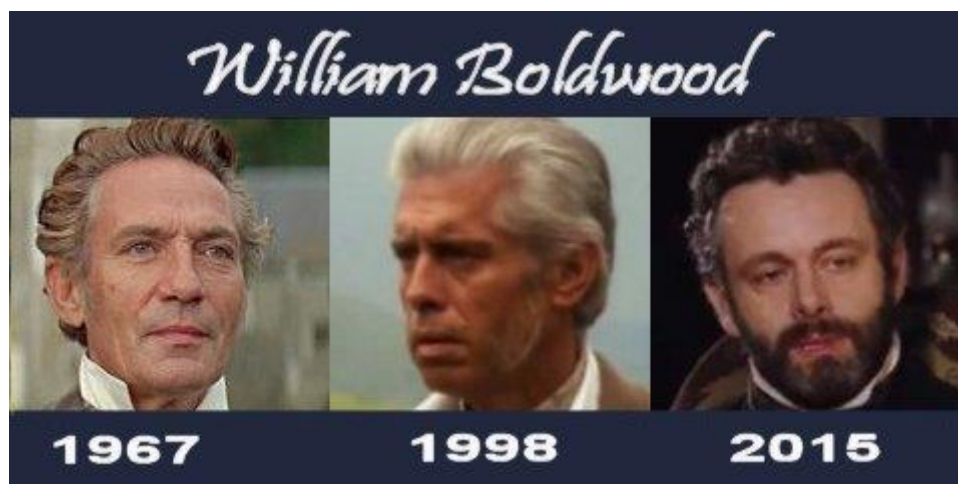


Bathsheba Everdene: the main character, a "handsome" woman who inherits her uncle's farm and decides to make a go of it. Two men fall in love with her. She was portrayed by Julie Christie in 1967, by Paloma Baeza in 1998. Carey Mulligan plays her in the new film.





Gabriel Oak is a farmer Bathsheba knew before she inherited the farm. He proposed marriage and she rejected him. When happenstance reunites them, he agrees to work for her. 1967: Alan Bates; 1998: Nathaniel Parker; 2015: Matthias Schoenaerts.



William Boldwood is a prosperous farmer, a lifelong bachelor. Bathsheba plays a joke on him that causes him to become obsessed with marrying her. 1967: Peter Finch; 1998: Nigel Terry; 2015: Michael Sheen.



Into this mix comes dashing and wild Sergeant Frank Troy and yeah, that bad boy thing kicks in. Things really get messy. 1967: Terence Stamp; 1998: Jonathan Firth; 2015: Tom Sturridge.

“Far from the Madding Crowd” was first published in 1874. Thomas Hardy took the title straight out of Thomas Gray’s poem “Elegy in a Country Churchyard.”

*“Far from the madding crowd’s ignoble strife,  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;  
Along the cool sequestered vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.”*

They may have done that in the poem but they certainly did

## Far From the Madding Crowd [Film]



[a] Please visit to watch the Film [2 hrs:45 min] (1967 Film)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3556B9odLBE&ab\\_channel=LoveLives](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3556B9odLBE&ab_channel=LoveLives)

## Awards (1967 Film) [3 wins & 8 Nominations]

Academy Awards, USA [1968](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Oscar	Best Music, Original Music Score <a href="#">Richard Rodney Bennett</a>
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BAFTA Awards [1968](#)

<b>Nominee</b> BAFTA Film Award	Best British Cinematography (Colour) <a href="#">Nicolas Roeg</a>
	Best British Costume (Colour) <a href="#">Alan Barrett</a>

Faro Island Film Festival [1967](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Moon Award	Best Film <a href="#">John Schlesinger</a>
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## Golden Globes, USA [1968](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Globe	Best Motion Picture - Drama
	Best Actor - Drama <a href="#">Alan Bates</a>
	Best Supporting Actress <a href="#">Prunella Ransome</a>

## National Board of Review, USA [1967](#)

<b>Winner</b> NBR Award	Best Film
	Best Actor <a href="#">Peter Finch</a>
	Top Ten Films

## National Society of Film Critics Awards, USA [1968](#)

<b>Nominee</b> NSFC Award	Best Cinematography <a href="#">Nicolas Roeg</a>
	Tied with <a href="#">Sven Nykvist</a> for <a href="#">Persona</a> (1966) in 3rd place.

### Some selected Scenes from the Film [[1967](#)]









Some selected Scenes from the Film [2015]





[\[b\] Please visit to watch the Film \[4 hrs:41 min\] \(1998 Film\)](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPPY9NzVPFY&ab\\_channel=kaenana](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPPY9NzVPFY&ab_channel=kaenana)

[\[c\] Please visit to watch the Film \[1 hr:59 min\] \(2015 Film\)](#)

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2935476/>

## Awards (2015 Film) [2 wins & 12 Nominations]

### British Screenwriters' Awards [2015](#)

<b>Nominee</b> British Screenwriters' Award	Best British Feature Film Writing <a href="#">David Nicholls</a>
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### Faro Island Film Festival [2015](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Moon Award	Best Film <a href="#">Thomas Vinterberg</a>
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### Golden Trailer Awards [2016](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Trailer	Best Romance TV Spot <a href="#">Searchlight Pictures</a>
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### Golden Trailer Awards [2015](#)

<b>Winner</b> Golden Trailer	Best Foreign Romance Trailer <a href="#">Searchlight Pictures</a> <a href="#">Create Advertising Group</a>
<b>Nominee</b> Golden Trailer	Best Original Score <a href="#">Searchlight Pictures</a> <a href="#">Create Advertising Group</a>

### International Film Music Critics Award (IFMCA) [2016](#)

<b>Nominee</b> IFMCA Award	Best Original Score for a Drama Film <a href="#">Craig Armstrong</a>
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### International Online Cinema Awards (INOCA) [2015](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Halfway Award	Best Adapted Screenplay <a href="#">David Nicholls</a>
	Best Costume Design <a href="#">Janet Patterson</a>

## Istanbul International Film Festival [2015](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Tulip	International Competition <a href="#">Thomas Vinterberg</a>
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## London Critics Circle Film Awards [2016](#)

<b>Nominee</b> ALFS Award	British/Irish Actress of the Year <a href="#">Carey Mulligan</a> For <a href="#">Suffragette</a>
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## Satellite Awards [2016](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Satellite Award	Best Costume Design <a href="#">Janet Patterson</a>
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## The WIFTS Foundation International Visionary Awards [2015](#)

<b>Winner</b> The Cinematographer Award	<a href="#">Charlotte Bruus Christensen</a>
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## Women's Image Network Awards [2015](#)

<b>Nominee</b> WIN Award	Outstanding Actress Feature Film <a href="#">Carey Mulligan</a>
	Outstanding Feature Film

[Please visit to listen to his Book \(Audiobook: all 57 chapters\)](#)

<https://youtu.be/4zfPWom3MPM> [13 hrs : 59 min]

Far From The Madding Crowd is Hardy's fourth novel. It centres on the lives of five characters: Gabriel Oak, Bathsheba Everdene, Mr Boldwood, Sgt. Troy and Fanny Robin. The plot involves love, loyalty, death and betrayal and all this is delivered to us in Hardy's most eloquent prose. The images of character and nature are painted for our mind's eye with sublime style. Finally, but not least, Hardy's use of the Greek chorus is unsurpassed in injecting comedy and nudging the story along.

## Quotes from Far From the Madding Crowd

### 01

"Well, what I mean is that I shouldn't mind being a bride at a wedding if I could be one without having a husband. But since a woman can't show off in that way by herself, I shan't marry—at least yet."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

feminism

women's rights

weddings

being single

Concepts

### 02

"I shall be up before you are awake; I shall be afield before you are up; and I shall have breakfasted before you are afield. In short, I shall astonish you all."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

feminism

leadership

hard work

early risers

astonishing

Concepts

### 03

"Your dear love, Bathsheba, is such a vast thing beside your pity that the loss of your pity as well as your love is no great addition to my sorrow, nor does the grain of your pity make it sensibly less."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

.

William Boldwood

Characters

love

pity

rejection

sorrow

Concepts

## 04

"How sweet to be able to disdain, when most of us are glad to say, 'Thank you!' I seem to hear it. 'No sir- I'm your better.'"

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

pride

distinction of social class

indifference

Concepts

## 05

"I hate to be thought men's property in that way—though possibly I shall be had some day."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

marriage

feminism

women's rights

property

Concepts

## 06

"Thank God I am not married: what would she have done in the poverty now coming upon me!"

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Gabriel Oak

Character

marriage

poverty

ruin

being single

Concepts

## 07

"The first is that the bailiff is dismissed for thieving, and that I have formed a resolution to have no bailiff at all, but to manage everything with my own head and hands."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

feminism

hard work

leaders

thieves

Concepts



## 08

"This fevered hope had grown up again like a grain of mustard-seed during the quiet which followed the hasty conjecture that Troy was drowned."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

William Boldwood

Sergeant Francis Troy

Characters

pursuit

drowning

hope

Concepts

## 09

"It appears that ordinary men take wives because possession is not possible without marriage, and that ordinary women accept husbands because marriage is not possible without possession."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Husband

Person

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

marriage

men

women

possessions

women's rights

wives

Concepts

## 10

"I've danced at your skittish heels, my beautiful Bathsheba, for many a long mile, and many a long day; and it is hard to begrudge me this one visit."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Gabriel Oak

Characters

love

pursuit

Concepts

## 11

"I shall never forgive God for making me a woman, and dearly am I beginning to pay for the honour of owning a pretty face."

Thomas Hardy

Author

God

Person

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

gender

woman

femininity

Concepts

## 12

"Bathsheba loved Troy in the way that only self-reliant women love when they abandon their self-reliance."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Sergeant Francis Troy

Characters

love

·self-reliance

·unhealthy relationships

Concepts

## 13

"His being higher in learning and birth than the ruck o' soldiers is anything but a proof of his worth. It shows his course to be down'ard."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Gabriel Oak

·Sergeant Francis Troy

Characters

worth

·education

·soldiers

·distinction of social class

Concepts

## 14

"He wasn't quite good enough for me."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

.

Gabriel Oak

Characters

pride

·distinction of social class

·good enough

Concepts

## 15

"The sheep were not insured. -All the savings of a frugal life had been dispersed at a blow: his hopes of being an independent farmer were laid low—possibly for ever."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Gabriel Oak

Character

poverty

.

loss

sheep

livelihood

Concepts

## 16

"Men are such constant fools! The rest may try to get over their passion with more or less success."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Sergeant Francis Troy

Character

love

men

passion

fools

Concepts

## 17

"I don't love you and I much fear that I never shall love you as much as a woman ought to love a husband."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

William Boldwood

Characters

love

·husbands

·not being in love

Concepts

## 18

"Such women as you a hundred men always covet—your eyes will bewitch scores on scores into an unavailing fancy for you—you can only marry one of that many."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

·Sergeant Francis Troy

Characters

beauty

·marriage

·flirting

·flattery

·bewitched

Concepts

## 19

"In those earlier days she had always nourished a secret contempt for girls who were the slaves of the first good-looking young fellow who should choose to salute them."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

women

·contempt

·handsome

·blinded by love

·blinded by looks



## Concepts

# 20

"Bathsheba burst into great sobs... but she determined to repress all evidences of feeling. She was conquered; but she would never own it as long as she lived."

Thomas Hardy

Author

Far from the Madding Crowd

Book

Bathsheba Everdene

Character

sadness

crying

strength

hiding feelings

Concepts

Please visit these web links for more Quotes:

[01] <https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Far-from-the-Madding-Crowd/quotes/>

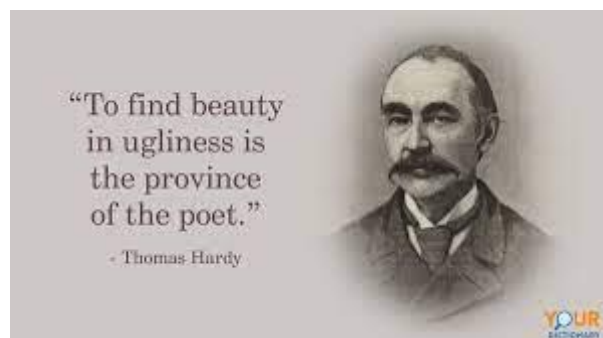
[02] <https://www.gradesaver.com/far-from-the-madding-crowd/study-guide/quotes>

[03] <https://www.shmoop.com/study-guides/literature/far-from-the-madding-crowd/quotes>

[04] <https://www.enkiquotes.com/far-from-the-madding-crowd-quotes.html>

[05] <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/far-from-the-madding-crowd>

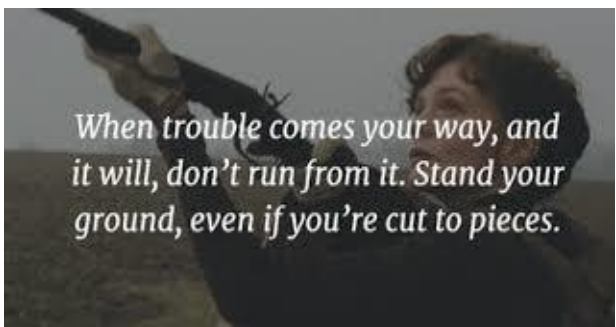
[06] <https://www.supersummary.com/far-from-the-madding-crowd/important-quotes/>





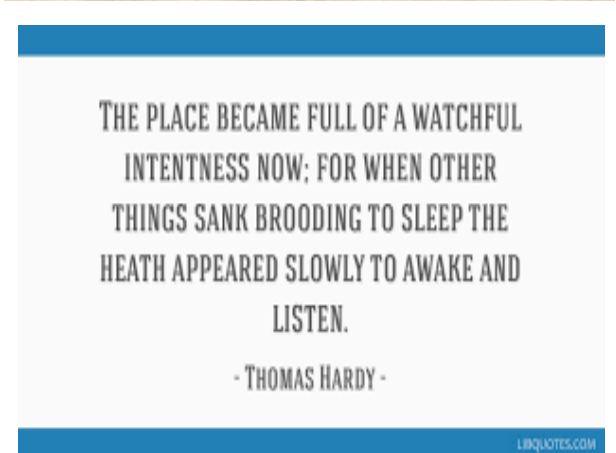
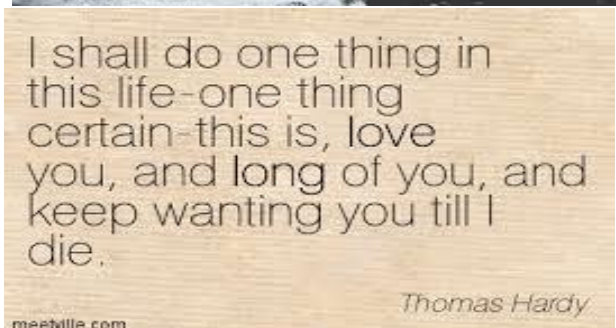
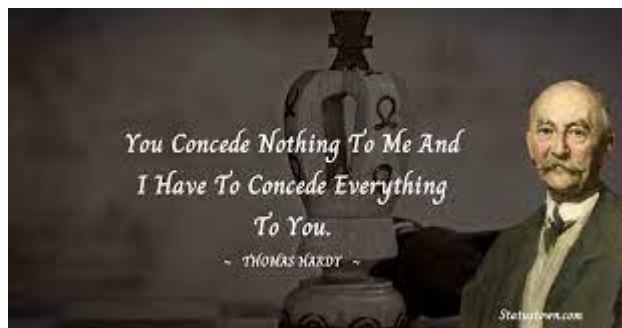
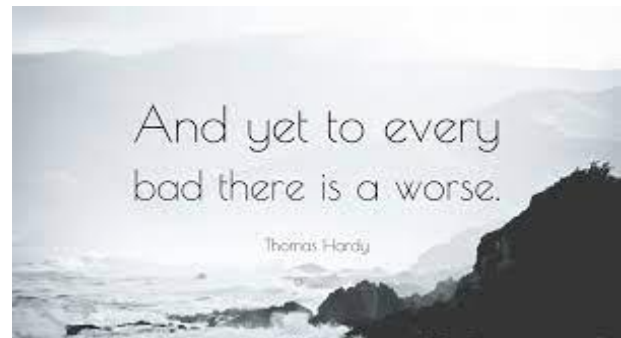
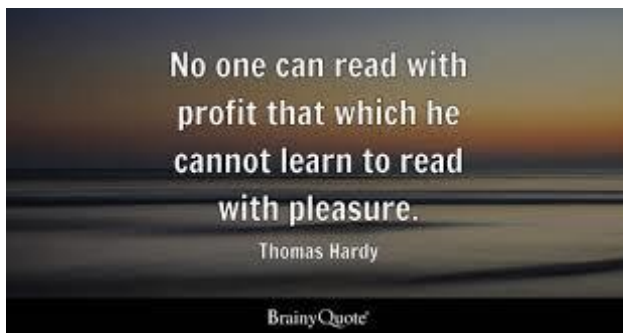
"people are specialized by their dislikes and antagonisms, whilst their goodwill is looked upon as no attribute at all."

Thomas Hardy (Far from the Madding Crowd)



"Time changes everything except something **within** us which is always **surprised** by change."

Thomas Hardy





# JUDE THE OBSCURE



Thomas Hardy

# Jude the Obscure

Thomas Hardy

“

The history of this novel (whose birth in its present shape has been much retarded by the necessities of periodical publication) is briefly as follows. The scheme was jotted down in 1890, from notes made in 1887 and onward, some of the circumstances being suggested by the death of a woman in the former year. The scenes were revisited in October, 1892; the narrative was written in outline in 1892 and the spring of 1893, and at full length, as it now appears, from August, 1893, onward into the next year; the whole, with the exception of a few chapters, being in the hands of the publisher by the end of 1894. It was begun as a serial story in HARPER'S MAGAZINE at the end of November, 1894, and was continued in monthly parts.

But, as in the case of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the magazine version was, for various reasons, abridged and modified in some degree, the present edition being the first in which the whole appears as originally written. And in the difficulty of coming to an early decision in the matter of a title, the tale was issued under a provisional name—two such titles having, in fact, been successively adopted. The present and final title, deemed on the whole the best, was one of the earliest thought of.

For a novel addressed by a man to men and women of full age, which attempts to deal unaffectedly with the fret and fever, derision and disaster, that may press in the wake of the strongest passion known to humanity, and to point, without a mincing of words, the tragedy of unfulfilled aims, I am not aware that there is anything in the handling to which exception can be taken.

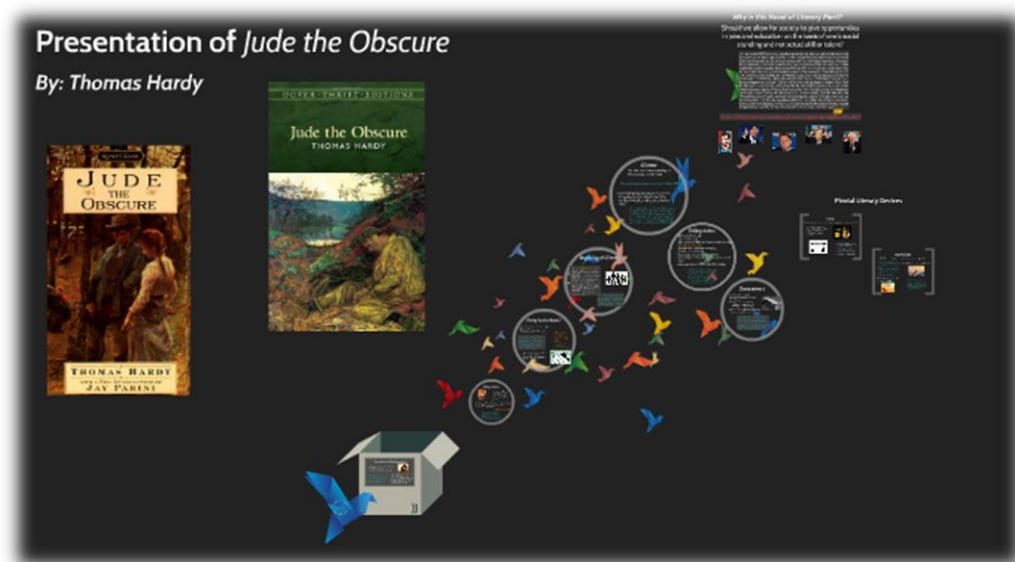
Like former productions of this pen, *Jude the Obscure* is simply an endeavour to give shape and coherence to a series of seemings, or personal impressions, the question of their consistency or their discordance, of their permanence or their transitoriness, being regarded as not of the first moment.”

August 1895

Thomas Hardy

## SUMMARY

Jude the Obscure takes place in Wessex, England in the Victorian era. Jude Fawley is a poor orphan raised by his great-aunt, but he dreams of studying at the university in Christminster, a nearby town. He is inspired in this dream by his old teacher, Richard Phillotson, who left with similar ambitions when Jude was a child. Jude starts teaching himself classical languages and learning stonemasonry work, but he is distracted from his studies by Arabella Donn, a vain, sensual young woman. Arabella pretends she is pregnant and tricks the honorable Jude into marrying her, but the marriage soon falls apart. Arabella moves to Australia and Jude finally makes his way to Christminster. At first he is enthralled by the place but he soon finds he cannot enter the university without wealth and social stature.



While in Christminster Jude meets his intelligent, religiously agnostic cousin Sue Bridehead. He immediately falls in love with her, though he tries to resist his feelings. He gets Sue a job with Phillotson, who has also failed to be accepted at a university and is a schoolteacher again. Sue soon gets engaged to Phillotson,



but her relationship with Jude also grows stronger and the two cousins become very close. Jude loves Sue passionately but Sue's own feelings are less clear. Sue is stung to learn about Jude's previous marriage, however, so she goes through with her marriage to Phillotson.

Jude gets depressed and turns to alcohol, and he is reunited with Arabella (who has returned from Australia) for one night. Jude and Sue keep meeting and Sue reveals that she is unhappy in her marriage, as she is repulsed by Phillotson's physical presence. Soon afterward Sue admits her feelings for Jude to Phillotson, and asks him if they can live apart. Phillotson agrees to let Sue leave him for Jude, but he suffers for this decision, which seems morally right to him, by losing his job and his social respectability.

Jude and Sue are united, but they live platonically for a while and they agree not to get married. Arabella reveals to Jude that she had a son by him while in Australia. Jude and Sue agree to take the unwanted boy in, and he arrives soon after. He has no name but is called "Little Father Time," and is a gloomy, world-weary child. Jude and Sue begin to lose work and respect because of their unmarried status, but they find they can't go through with the wedding ceremony. They become lovers and begin to lead a nomadic life, having two children of their own and caring for Little Father Time.

Jude falls ill for a while, and when he recovers, he decides he wants to move back to Christminster and pursue his old dream. The family has trouble finding a room because they are unmarried and have children, and Jude has to stay separately from Sue and the children. That night Sue and Little Father Time

both grow depressed, and the boy decides that he and the other children are the cause of the family's troubles. The next morning Jude and Sue find that Little Father Time has hanged himself and the other two children.

Sue breaks down at this tragedy and grows obsessively religious, believing that she is being punished for her disbelief and sexual liberties. She leaves Jude and returns to Phillotson, despite having no change in her feelings for either. Jude is soon tricked into marrying Arabella again, and both marriages are unhappy. Jude gets sick and visits Sue one last time in the rain. They kiss but then Sue sends Jude away for the last time. As "penance" for this kiss Sue begins a sexual relationship with Phillotson. Jude dies soon after, and Arabella immediately starts looking for a new husband.

## CHARACTER LIST

### **Jude Fawley**

A young man of obscure origins who aspires to a university education and a place in the church and who learns the trade of ecclesiastical stonework to help him realize his goals.

### **Sue Bridehead**

Jude's cousin, an intelligent, unconventional young woman whom Jude loves and lives with but who is twice married to Phillotson.

### **Arabella Donn**

A sensually attractive young woman whom Jude marries twice and who in between is married to Cartlett.

### **Richard Phillotson**

Jude's former teacher who has the same aspirations as his pupil.

### **Little Father Time**

(Jude) The son of Jude and Arabella.

**Drusilla Fawley**

Jude's great-aunt, who raises Jude.

**Physician Vilbert**

A quack doctor of local reputation.

**Mrs. Edlin**

A widow who looks after Drusilla Fawley before she dies and who is a friend to Jude and Sue.

**Mr. Donn**

Arabella's father, a pig farmer and later owner of a pork shop.

**Anny**

A girl friend of Arabella's.

**Cartlett**

Arabella's "Australian husband."

**George Gillingham**

A teacher friend of Phillotson's.

**Tinker Taylor**

A "decayed church-ironmonger" and drinking companion of Jude's.

## CHARACTER ANALYSIS

### Jude Fawley



Jude is obscure in that he comes from uncertain origins, struggles largely unnoticed to realize his aspirations, and dies without having made any mark on the world. He is also obscure in the sense of being ambiguous: he is divided internally, and the conflicts range all the way from that between sexual desire and knowledge to that between two different views of the world. Jude is, therefore, struggling both with the world and with himself.

He is not well equipped to win. Though he is intelligent enough and determined, he tries to force his way to the knowledge he wants. Though well-intentioned and goodhearted, he often acts impulsively on the basis of too little objective evidence. Though he is unable to hurt an animal or another human being, he shows very little

concern for himself and his own survival, often needlessly sacrificing his own good. He never learns, as Phillotson finally does perhaps too late, to calculate how to get what he wants. In short, he is more human than divine, as Hardy points out.

He is obsessed with ideals. Very early he makes Christminster into an ideal of the intellectual life, and his admitted failure there does not dim the luster with which it shines in his imagination to the very end of his life. He searches for the ideal woman who will be both lover and companion, and though he finds passion without intellectual interests in Arabella and wide interests but frigidity in Sue he maintains the latter as his ideal to his deathbed. Recognizing the Christminster holiday just before he dies, Jude says, "And I here. And Sue defiled!"

Jude is reconciled to his fate before he dies only in the sense that he recognizes what it is. In a conversation with Mrs. Edlin he says that perhaps he and Sue were ahead of their time in the way they wanted to live. He does not regret the struggle he has made-, at the least, as he lies ill he tries to puzzle out the meaning of his life. At the very end, however, like Job he wonders why he was born. But then so perhaps does every man, Hardy seems to imply.

### Sue Bridehead

It is easy for the modern reader to dislike Sue, even, as D. H. Lawrence did, to make her into the villain of the book. (Lawrence thought Sue represented everything that was wrong with modern women.) Jude, as well as Hardy, obviously sees her as charming, lively, intelligent, interesting, and attractive in the way that an adolescent girl is. But it is impossible not to see other sides to her personality: she is self-centered, wanting more than she is willing to give; she is intelligent but her knowledge is fashionable and her use of it is shallow; she is outspoken but afraid to suit her actions to her words; she wants to love and be loved but is morbidly afraid of her emotions and desires.

In short, she is something less than the ideal Jude sees in her; like him she is human. She is also a nineteenth-century woman who has given herself more freedom than she knows how to handle. She wants to believe that she is free to establish a new sort of relationship to men, even as she demands freedom to examine new ideas. But at the end she finds herself in the role of sinner performing penance for her misconduct. As Jude says, they were perhaps ahead of their time.

If she is not an ideal, she is the means by which Jude encounters a different view of life, one which he comes to adopt even as she flees from it. She is also one of the means by which Jude's hopes are frustrated and he is made to undergo suffering and defeat. But it is a frustration which he invites or which is given him by a power neither he nor Sue understands or seems to control.

## Arabella Donn



Arabella is the least complex of the main characters; she is also the least ambitious, though what she wants she pursues with determination and enterprise. What she is after is simple enough: a man who will satisfy her and who will provide the comforts and some of the luxuries of life. She is attractive in an overblown way, good-humored, practical, uneducated of course but shrewd, cunning, and tenacious. She is common in her tastes and interests. She is capable of understanding a good deal in the emotional life of other people, especially women, as shown on

several occasions with Sue.

Arabella never quite finds what she wants either. Jude's ambitions put her off when they are first married, but after him Cartlett is obviously a poor substitute, though she doesn't complain. She wants Jude again and gets him, but she isn't satisfied, since he is past the point of being much good to her.

That she is enterprising is demonstrated everywhere in the novel; she has a self-interest that amounts to an instinct for survival, rather than the self-interest of a Sue that is the same as pride. And, of course, she does survive intact in a way the others don't. Though at the end of the novel she is standing by Jude's coffin, Vilbert awaits her somewhere in the city. Life goes on, in short.

## Richard Phillotson

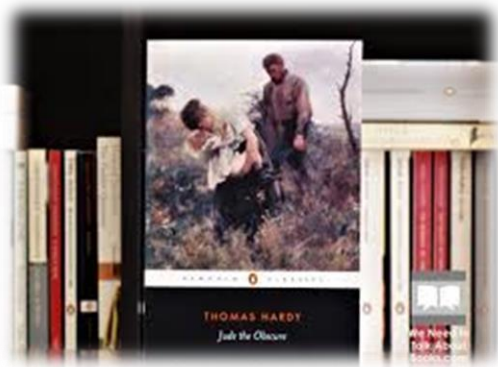
Phillotson is eminently the respectable man. Though he fails to achieve the same goals Jude pursues, his bearing and view of things do not change much. Even when Arabella encounters him on the road to Alfredston, now down on his luck and teaching at Marygreen because it's the only place that will have him, this air of respectability remains. It must be this which Sue can't stand about him, the respectability plus the legal right to make love to her.

Sue's opinion of him does not make him any less decent. He is like Jude in many ways: he is goodhearted and honorable-, he allows instinct to overrule reason; he is too accommodating for his own good; he is intelligent. Like Jude he is ill-equipped to get what he wants in life and soon resigns himself to mediocrity. However, unlike Jude he no longer is dazzled by ideals, perhaps because he is older. Maybe too late he learns to act on the basis of calculation, estimating that Sue's return will be worth the benefits it may bring.

Phillotson, in short, is a man whom it is easy neither to like nor to dislike; he goes largely unnoticed.



## THEME



In no other novel by Hardy is theme so important. And his theme here may be stated briefly as follows: man is becoming aware that his life is governed by old ideas and old institutions and he desires to break out of these obsolete forms. This modern spirit causes him to question old beliefs and institutions

and to seek new ones, to give up what is known and tried for the unknown and new, and hence to experience loneliness and frustration as he searches on his own. Specifically in the novel, Hardy depicts characters who raise questions about such things as religious beliefs, social classes, the conventions of marriage, and elite educational institutions and who feel in the absence of the old certainties that the universe may be governed by a mysterious, possibly malign power. Some critics have suggested that Hardy had in mind when he wrote the novel Matthew Arnold's comments on the coming of the modern spirit.

## STRUCTURE



The structure of the novel might be described as the reversals of belief in Jude and Sue and their changing marital relationships as they both go down to defeat. In the beginning Sue's view of things is secular and rationalist, expressed, for example, in her sympathy with ancient rather than medieval culture, her scorn of conventional religious belief, her buying of pagan statuary, her reading of Gibbon. Jude's beliefs are, at first, conventionally Christian, as his desire to be ordained, his reading of standard authors, and his love of medieval culture and architecture show. By the end of the novel Sue has reverted to conventional beliefs, as evidenced by her concern for the sanctity of marriage and her desire to perform penances for her sins. On the other

hand, Jude no longer professes his old beliefs and finds himself, as he says in his speech to the street crowd in Christminster, in "a chaos of principles."

This change in beliefs is closely paralleled by their marital relationships. At first, they are separated by marriage to other people as they are apart in belief. As Jude's ideas

change, they are legally freed by divorce, and they come to live together and to be "married," in fact, if not in name. When Sue returns to conventional Christian beliefs, they separate and remarry their first spouses.

Jude's death as a failure in Christminster and Sue's forcing herself to go to Phillotson's bed are striking signs of their defeat in life. This defeat is mirrored as well in Phillotson, who at Marygreen has fallen to the bottom professionally and who stiffly requires Sue to swear loyalty to him on a New Testament, and to a lesser extent in Arabella, who though she loses Jude does not lose her vitality.

In these changes and defeat Hardy has embodied the theme of his novel: Jude and Sue have been caught up in the modern spirit, have struggled to break free of the old ways, and have suffered and failed. It is this that justifies Hardy's description of the novel, in his preface to it, as a "tragedy of unfulfilled aims."

## FILM, TV, RADIO, THEATRICAL, AND PODCAST ADAPTATIONS

The novel has been adapted into:

- A six-part television serial, [\*Jude the Obscure\*](#) (1971), directed by [Hugh David](#), starring [Robert Powell](#) and [Fiona Walker](#)
- A feature film, [\*Jude\*](#) (1996), directed by [Michael Winterbottom](#), starring [Christopher Eccleston](#) and [Kate Winslet](#)
- A two-part musical stage adaptation of *Jude the Obscure*<sup>[16]</sup> by Ian Finley (book), Bruce Benedict (music), Jonathan Fitts (music), and Jerome Davis (lyrics), premiered at [Burning Coal Theatre Company](#) in Raleigh, NC in April 2012
- A podcast called "Obscure" where [Michael Ian Black](#) reads *Jude The Obscure* with commentary, was released in May 2018.
- The British playwright [Howard Brenton](#) wrote an updated adaptation of the novel, simply titled *Jude*, which premiered at [The Hampstead Theatre](#) in North London in May 2019. In this version, Jude is a free-spirited female Syrian refugee who works as a cleaner, her cousin is a male relative who becomes a radical Muslim, and she is regularly visited by a figure representing the Greek poet [Euripides](#).
- The BBC Radio 4 series "Hardy's Women" (2020) featured a three-part adaptation of *Jude the Obscure*.

❖ [Please join this web page to listen the Audiobook \[Jude the Obscure\]](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qs57pFMSPCo&ab\\_channel=FreeAudiobooks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qs57pFMSPCo&ab_channel=FreeAudiobooks)

## JUDE THE OBSCURE **FILM**

### Awards [5 wins & 6 nominations]

#### Camerimage [1996](#)

<b>Winner</b> Silver Frog	<a href="#">Eduardo Serra</a>
<b>Nominee</b> Golden Frog	<a href="#">Eduardo Serra</a>

#### Chicago International Film Festival [1996](#)

<b>Winner</b> Silver Hugo	Best Actor <a href="#">Christopher Eccleston</a>
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#### Dinard British Film Festival [1996](#)

<b>Winner</b> Golden Hitchcock	<a href="#">Michael Winterbottom</a>
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#### Edinburgh International Film Festival [1996](#)

<b>Winner</b> Best New British Feature	<a href="#">Michael Winterbottom</a>
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#### Evening Standard British Film Awards [1997](#)

<b>Winner</b> Evening Standard British Film Award	Best Actress <a href="#">Kate Winslet</a> For <a href="#">Sense and Sensibility</a>
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#### Italian National Syndicate of Film Journalists [1997](#)

<b>Nominee</b> European Silver Ribbon	<a href="#">Michael Winterbottom</a>
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#### Karlovy Vary International Film Festival [1996](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Crystal Globe	<a href="#">Michael Winterbottom</a>
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## Satellite Awards [1997](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Golden Satellite Award	Best Actor in a Motion Picture, Drama <a href="#">Christopher Eccleston</a>
	Best Screenplay, Adapted <a href="#">Hossein Amini</a>

## Tokyo International Film Festival [1996](#)

<b>Nominee</b> Tokyo Grand Prix	<a href="#">Michael Winterbottom</a>
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Please visit to watch the Film: [\[1996\]](#)

[a]

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tffMzg2RIU&ab\\_channel=Heart%27sWhisper](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tffMzg2RIU&ab_channel=Heart%27sWhisper) [2 hrs:2 min]

[b] <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0116722/> [2 hrs:3 min]

## Cast

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- [Christopher Eccleston](#) as Jude Fawley
- [Kate Winslet](#) as Sue Bridehead
- [Liam Cunningham](#) as Phillotson
- [Rachel Griffiths](#) as Arabella
- [June Whitfield](#) as Aunt Drusilla
- [Berwick Kaler](#) as Farmer Troutham
- [David Tennant](#) as drunk undergraduate
- [Kerry Shale](#) as Showman
- [Paul Copley](#) as Mr. Willis
- [Paul Bown](#) as Uncle Jim
- [Lorraine Hilton](#) as shopkeeper

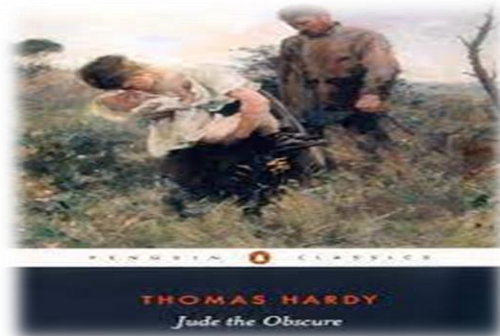
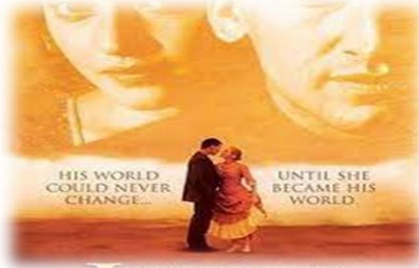
## Filming locations

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The production filmed in a variety of countries including [France](#), [New Zealand](#) and the [UK](#). The [Kent and East Sussex Railway](#) was used as a film location for the scenes where Jude (Christopher Eccleston) and Sue (Kate Winslet) are on a train which was intercut with scenery from the North of England.



## Some selected Scenes from the Film







## AN INTRODUCTION TO *JUDE THE OBSCURE*

[Article written by: Greg Buzwell & Published 15 May 2014]

*Greg Buzwell considers how Hardy's last novel exposes the hypocrisy of conventional late-Victorian society, taking on topics such as education and class, marriage and the New Woman.*

*Jude the Obscure*, the last completed novel by Thomas Hardy, received a mixed critical reception upon its publication in 1895. The novelist H G Wells in an unsigned piece for the *Saturday Review* eulogised 'There is no other novelist alive with the breadth of sympathy, the knowledge or the power for the creation of Jude'. In stark contrast the reviewer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* renamed the book 'Jude the Obscene', and branded the book a work of 'naked squalor and ugliness'. The Bishop of Wakefield went even further, being reputedly so disgusted by the novel he threw his copy into the fire. Even Edmund Gosse, a generally sympathetic critic of Hardy's work and a personal friend, was given to reflect: 'What has Providence done to Mr Hardy that he should rise up in the arable land of Wessex and shake his fist at his creator?'

It is easy to see the reasons underlying the book's critical mauling at the hands of conservative Victorian society, as well as its more positive reception from those, like H G Wells, at the vanguard of a new generation of intellectuals. *Jude the*

*Obscure* attacks the hypocrisy and double-standards inherent in late-Victorian attitudes towards class, education, the role of women and marriage. At the same time, the book reveals the lie behind the widely held Victorian belief – as expressed for example in Samuel Smiles's bestseller *Self Help* (1859) – that hard work, talent and application were in themselves sufficient for individuals to achieve success and advancement. Jude studies tirelessly to realise his ambitions but an indifferent Fate, allied to society's entrenched attitudes towards the working classes, condemn his efforts to failure.

### **Education and class**

Education provides the means for upward social mobility but, in doing so, it also challenges the established order that gives advantages and privileges to those already at the higher end of the class system. From the 1870s this had been a reason for Oxford University in particular to hold back the spread of adult education to the working classes in an effort to protect the already over-crowded middle-class professions. Jude meets nothing but resistance from the authorities at Christminster – Hardy's fictional name for Oxford – in his pursuit of education and social improvement. When he writes to the college masters for advice he receives but a single reply, a brief letter from the Master of Christminster's Bibliol College stating that, judging from Jude's description of himself as a working-man, 'I venture to think that you will have a much better chance of success in life by remaining in your own sphere and sticking to your trade than by adopting any other course' (Part Second, ch. 6). In other words the advice from Christminster is that the working classes should remain working class.

Access to Oxford and Cambridge at this time also required a detailed knowledge of classical Greek and Latin texts, both taught intensively at expensive public schools. Jude's attempts to teach himself Latin and Greek from various primers, although admirable, were never going to put him on an equal footing with those who could afford an expensive education. Again middle-class rules and middle-class money acted to keep the working classes in check. Even though change was looming – Ruskin College, established with the aim of providing educational opportunities for working-class men denied access to university, was founded in 1899 – the possibility of Jude, and people like him, gaining economic mobility out of the working class via education remained unlikely.

### **Marriage, and the role of women**

If the dominant theme in the first part of the novel is education, then the focus in the second is marriage and the opportunities available to women in a largely patriarchal society. *Jude the Obscure* addresses the horrors of sexual relationships devoid of love; the consequences arising from ignorance about sex, and the unenlightened view held by society and the Church that an unhappy marriage was preferable to a loving, sexual relationship outside of wedlock. It also explores society's attitude towards women as they attempt to secure financial security for themselves – either via marriage or the pursuit of a career.

Two women play a key role in the exploration of these ideas, and each highlights in a different fashion the choices faced by women at the time: Arabella Donn – seductive, intelligent but uneducated, manipulative and a born survivor; and Sue Bridehead,

Jude's cousin – intelligent, free-spirited (her love of Edgar Allan Poe's poem 'The Raven' is indicative of her unconventional tastes). Sue's ability to support herself financially via her career as a teacher, and her opposition to marriage marks her out as someone readers at the time would have readily labelled a 'New Woman'.

### **Arabella Donn and the pursuit of a husband**

Jude first encounters Arabella when she interrupts his daydream about becoming a Doctor of Divinity by throwing a pig's penis at him. Sexuality, in the form of Arabella's choice of missile, literally hits Jude on the head and diverts him from his scholarly pursuits. Throughout the book Arabella takes a pragmatic and direct approach to life. To secure her future she desires a husband who will provide for her. Seeing Jude as a suitable candidate, she seduces him and ultimately traps him into marriage. Later, after becoming frustrated at his inability to provide the level of financial security she requires, Arabella emigrates to Australia and enters into a bigamous marriage, again with a view to securing financial security in the process. Hardy's portrayal of Arabella as a promiscuous woman using her sexual desirability to trap men – behaviour, it could be argued, society had helped create through its limited career opportunities for women – caused outrage. The novelist Margaret Oliphant described Arabella as 'a human pig ... quite without shame or any consciousness of any occasion for shame'.<sup>[4]</sup> It was common in literature to show fallen women as suffering and, indeed, as often paying the ultimate price for their immoral behaviour by throwing themselves to their deaths in a river in a symbolic act of cleansing. Arabella's adeptness in using her sexuality to secure husbands and survive, without showing any signs either of guilt or disease as a result of her promiscuous activities antagonised conservative Victorian opinion. In an elegant twist at the conclusion of the book, Arabella does indeed go down to the river but not to drown herself. She goes there in search of another husband.

### **Sue Bridehead and the New Woman**

Marriage in *Jude the Obscure* frequently becomes trivialised through the farcical events surrounding it. When listed in stark fashion, all the marriages contracted in the novel involve deceit, social necessity or a compulsion to conform to religious dictates. Jude marries Arabella, believing her pregnant. Arabella leaves Jude and contracts a bigamous marriage when Jude's dreams of a remunerative career come to nothing. Sue marries the school teacher Phillotson, whom she finds physically repulsive, partly out of spite at Jude concealing his marriage to Arabella. Phillotson out of kindness divorces Sue. Jude and Sue subsequently live together out of wedlock and thus incur the disgust of Victorian society. Later Sue returns to Phillotson in a perverse act of self-punishment brought about by guilt at the death of her children – a tragic event she regards as a form of divine retribution for her 'modern' ways. Everywhere in the novel marriage is seen as an artificial construct propped up by the Church and leading to misery and deceit, while living together outside of marriage invariably leads to ostracism from respectable society.

Of all the characters in the novel it is Sue who is the most outspoken in her attacks on marriage. She describes marriage as a 'hopelessly vulgar' institution, and observes 'the flowers in the bride's hand are sadly like the garland which decked the heifers for sacrifice in old times' (Part Fifth, ch. 3; ch. 4). She also voices the opinion, one which

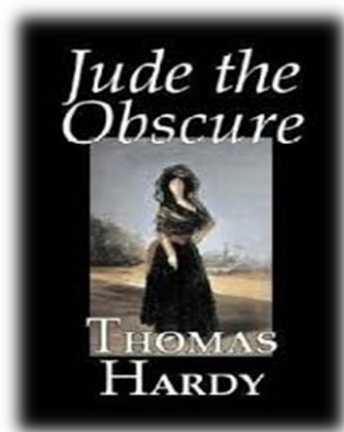
lies at the heart of the novel, that 'it is foreign to a man's nature to go on loving a person when he is told that he must and shall be a person's lover' (Part Fifth, ch. 1). In other words, the vows taken to love and to cherish during a marriage ceremony cannot possibly hold over a lifetime given that one's attitudes, desires and emotions towards one's husband or wife are bound to change over time.

## Conclusion

*Jude the Obscure*, like the characters within its pages, was ahead of its time. Its sympathetic portrayal of Jude, a young working-class man struggling against entrenched attitudes; of Arabella, attempting to secure a stable future for herself via a cynical approach to marriage; and of Sue Bridehead whose free-spirited independence is ultimately broken by the unyielding nature of conventional opinion; all of these looks ahead to the work of D H Lawrence, particularly *Sons and Lovers* (1913) and *Women in Love* (1920). The clash between spirit and flesh, together with society's attitudes towards class, had been common themes in Hardy's work before but in *Jude the Obscure* they find their most impassioned analysis. As Jude comments at the end of the novel regarding his unmarried relationship with Sue, which only brought condemnation: 'As for Sue and me when we were at our best, long ago – when our minds were clear, and our love of truth fearless – the time was not ripe for us! Our ideas were fifty years too soon to be any good to us. And so the resistance they met with brought reaction in her, and recklessness and ruin in me!' (Part Sixth, ch. 10). Jude and Sue fail in their ambitions and their pursuit of happiness not through their own lack of desire and ambition, but through the unyielding attitudes of the time.

### Written by [Greg Buzwell](#)

Greg Buzwell is Curator of Contemporary Literary Archives at the British Library. He has co-curated three major exhibitions for the Library – *Terror and Wonder: The Gothic Imagination*; *Shakespeare in Ten Acts* and *Gay UK: Love, Law and Liberty*. His research focuses primarily on the Gothic literature of the Victorian fin de siècle. He has also edited and introduced collections of supernatural tales by authors including Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Edgar Allan Poe and Walter de la Mare.



# The Return of the Native

Thomas Hardy

*Thomas Hardy's novel The Return of the Native was published serially in Belgravia magazine in 1878.*

*Its setting, the formidable and unforgiving Egdon Heath, is based on the Wessex region of England where Hardy was born. Hardy provides a map that gives the locations that his love- and grief-driven characters visit as the story unfolds.*

*The novel explores the themes of class, chance, fate, superstition, and social upheaval.*

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## Preface

The date at which the following events are assumed to have occurred may be set down as between 1840 and 1850, when the old watering place herein called "Budmouth" still retained sufficient afterglow from its Georgian gaiety and prestige to lend it an absorbing attractiveness to the romantic and imaginative soul of a lonely dweller inland.

Under the general name of "Egdon Heath," which has been given to the sombre scene of the story, are united or typified heaths of various real names, to the number of at least a dozen; these being virtually one in character and aspect, though their original unity, or partial unity, is now somewhat disguised by intrusive strips and slices brought under the plough with varying degrees of success, or planted to woodland.

It is pleasant to dream that some spot in the extensive tract whose southwestern quarter is here described, may be the heath of that traditionary King of Wessex—Lear.

July, 1895

Thomas Hardy



## Characters

- **Clement (Clym) Yeobright**

A man of about thirty who gives up a business career in Paris to return to his native Egdon Heath to become a "schoolmaster to the poor and ignorant" (Hardy himself gave up a successful career as a London architect and returned to his native Dorchester to become a writer). "The beauty here visible would in no time be ruthlessly overrun by its parasite, thought." Clym is the "native" to which the book's title refers.

- **Eustacia Vye**

A raven-haired young beauty who chafes against her life on the heath and longs to escape it to lead the more adventure-filled life of the world. Some of the heathfolk think she is a witch. Hardy describes her as "the raw material of a divinity" whose "celestial imperiousness, love, wrath, and fervour had proved to be somewhat thrown away on netherward Egdon."

- **Mrs. Yeobright**

Clym's mother, a widow of inflexible standards. Thomasin has lived with her for many years, but Clym is her only child. She strongly disapproves of Eustacia.

- **Thomasin (Tamsin) Yeobright**

Clym's cousin and Mrs. Yeobright's niece, a young girl of gentle ways and conventional expectations. In Hardy's original manuscript, Wildeve tricks her with a false marriage to seduce her. "Mrs Yeobright saw a little figure...undefended except by the power of her own hope."

- **Damon Wildeve**

Eustacia's former lover and Thomasin's first husband. He is an ex-engineer who has failed in his profession and who now keeps an inn, "The Quiet Woman"—so-called because its sign depicts a decapitated woman carrying her own head. He has a wandering eye and an appetite for women. "A lady killing career."

- **Diggory Venn**

A resourceful man of twenty-four and a reddleman (a travelling seller of redden, red chalk used for marking sheep). He selflessly protects Thomasin throughout the novel despite the fact that she refused to marry him two years before. He keeps a watchful eye on Eustacia to make sure Wildeve doesn't go back to her. At the end, he renounces his trade to become a dairy farmer like his father, and in doing so loses the red skin. He is then seen as a suitable husband for Thomasin. Venn's red coloration and frequent narrative references to his 'Mephistophelean' or diabolical character are symbolic and

important. In one particularly significant chapter ("The Morning and Evening of an Eventful Day"), Venn displays an increasingly unlikely string of good luck, repeatedly rolling dice and defeating a rival. This event makes Venn something of a *deus ex machina*, as well as a quasi-magical figure. While Hardy abandons these aspects of Venn's character by the end of the novel, during his 'reddleman' phase, Venn lends elements of magical realism and what modern readers would understand to be superheroic elements to the novel.

- **Captain Drew**  
Eustacia's grandfather and a former naval officer (renamed Captain Vye in later editions).
- **Timothy Fairway**  
A sententious man of middle age who is greatly respected by the other heathfolk.
- **Grandfer Cantle**—A somewhat senile and always lively ex-soldier of about sixty-nine.
- **Christian Cantle**  
Grandfer Cantle's fearful and timid thirty-one-year-old son.
- **Humphrey**  
Clym's eventual colleague, a furze cutter (furze is a low, prickly shrub more commonly called gorse).
- **Susan Nunsuch**  
Eustacia's nearest neighbour and bitterest enemy who convinces herself that Eustacia's witchery has caused her son's sickness. In a memorable scene, Susan tries to protect him by making a wax effigy of Eustacia, sticking it full of pins, and melting it in her fireplace while uttering the Lord's Prayer backward. Eustacia drowns later that night.
- **Johnny Nunsuch**  
Susan's son, a young boy. He encounters Mrs. Yeobright during her fatal walk home and, in obedience to her wishes, reports her last words to Clym: *I am a broken-hearted woman cast off by my son.*
- **Charley**  
A sixteen-year-old boy who works for Captain Drew and who admires Eustacia, largely from afar.
- **Egdon Heath**  
The setting for all the novel's events; considered by some critics to be the leading character as well. It is profoundly ancient, the scene of intense but long-forgotten pagan lives. As its tumuli attest, it is also a graveyard that has

swallowed countless generations of inhabitants without changing much itself. To Thomasin, Clym, and Diggory, it is a benign, natural place; in Eustacia's eyes, it becomes a malevolent presence intent on destroying her.

## Summary

*The Return of the Native* opens with Venn, a reddleman, transporting Thomasin Yeobright back to Egdon Heath. Thomasin is upset because she was supposed to wed Damon Wildeve earlier that day but couldn't due to an issue with her marriage license. Meanwhile, the residents of Egdon Heath are lighting bonfires to celebrate Guy Fawkes Day. The locals dance, sing, and gossip about the latest news on the heath, including the fact that Clym Yeobright is set to return from Paris at Christmas time. Clym is Thomasin's cousin, and the locals always assumed that the two of them would marry before Clym left for Paris. The locals also discuss how Mrs. Yeobright, Clym's mother, has openly objected to Thomasin's marriage to Wildeve, whom she considers socially inferior.

When Mrs. Yeobright learns that Thomasin didn't marry Wildeve after all, she gets even angrier. She knows that the aborted marriage will be the talk of the town, further embarrassing the Yeobright family. Though Wildeve insists that he still plans to marry Thomasin and will do so as soon as possible, he's not being entirely truthful: the same night he was supposed to marry Thomasin, he pays a visit to Eustacia Vye, whom he has been courting in secret. Eustacia likes Wildeve, though she is angry about his plans to marry Thomasin. Both Eustacia and Wildeve share a mutual hatred of Egdon Heath and dream about escaping; in particular, Eustacia longs to travel to Paris.

Despite Wildeve's promises, he continues to postpone his marriage to Thomasin. In the meantime, he repeatedly meets with Eustacia in private and promises her that he still loves her. Unbeknownst to Wildeve and Eustacia, Venn has been spying on them and caught wind of their tryst. Venn loves Thomasin, though she rejected him when he asked her to marry him. Nonetheless, Venn remains faithful to Thomasin and wants what's best for her, so he visits Eustacia and asks her to stay away from Wildeve. Unfortunately, this only makes Eustacia want Wildeve more.

Eustacia's infatuation with Wildeve ends once she hears that Clym Yeobright is returning from Paris. She considers Clym a knight in shining armor who can take her away from Egdon, so she sets her sights on him instead. No longer able to marry Eustacia, Wildeve goes through with his

marriage to Thomasin. Meanwhile, Clym and Eustacia strike up a romance. However, Clym isn't exactly the person Eustacia thought he'd be: Eustacia thought that Clym could help her escape to Paris, but Clym wants to stay put and start a school in Egdon. Ultimately, they reach a compromise, and Clym promises to move them to Budmouth, a fashionable, seaside city not far from Egdon. Though Mrs. Yeobright disapproves of the Vye family, Clym and Eustacia get married.

Clym and Eustacia's happiness is short-lived. Clym lacks the funds to move them to Budmouth, and his plans to open a school prove difficult. To make matters worse, Clym starts to go blind, which forces him to abandon his studies. He then becomes a furze-cutter, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Yeobright and Eustacia, who consider this a low-class profession. Clym's relationship with his mother deteriorates after Mrs. Yeobright accuses Eustacia of cheating on Clym with Wildeve, though this never happened. For a long time, Clym and his mother don't speak to each other.

One hot, summer day, Mrs. Yeobright decides to visit Clym and make amends. When Mrs. Yeobright arrives, Eustacia is inside talking to Wildeve. Not wanting Mrs. Yeobright to think any worse of her than she already does, Eustacia does not open the door for Mrs. Yeobright. Instead, she sneaks Wildeve out the back and assumes that Clym, who is taking a nap, will get up and answer the door. However, Clym does not answer. By the time Eustacia returns, Mrs. Yeobright has left. Meanwhile, Mrs. Yeobright walks home depressed—she thinks Eustacia and Clym have deliberately rejected her, and she shares this fear with a young boy named Johnny who accompanies her as she walks. After Mrs. Yeobright parts ways with Johnny, a venomous snake bites her.

Clym later wakes from his nap and decides to visit his mother, despite Eustacia's protests. However, on his way to his mother's house, he discovers her lying unconscious in the grass. Clym takes Mrs. Yeobright to the nearest cabin. The locals fetch a doctor to try to save Mrs. Yeobright, but they are too late, and she dies. To make matters worse, Johnny tells Clym that his mother was angry with him before she died. This news devastates Clym, and Eustacia is too scared to tell him the truth.

After Mrs. Yeobright's funeral, Clym starts asking around to figure out why his mother was so mad at him. Eventually, Johnny tells Clym that Mrs. Yeobright was walking back from Clym's house after Clym turned her down. Johnny also tells him that Eustacia was inside with Wildeve when. Enraged, Clym confronts Eustacia and the two of them have a big fight. Eustacia leaves Clym and moves back in with her grandfather. In the meantime,

Thomasin gives birth to her first child, which she names baby Eustacia, and Wildeve inherits a fortune.

Wildeve feels bad for Eustacia, whom he still loves, and tells her that he will help her in any way he can. In response, Eustacia asks him to take her to Budmouth, where she can find a ship to Paris. Wildeve agrees to do so, though he does not tell Thomasin about his plans. One night, Thomasin follows Wildeve, realizes that he is going to see Eustacia, and assumes the two of them are having an affair. Shortly afterward, Thomasin arrives at Clym's house and tells him that she thinks Wildeve and Eustacia are planning to run away together. Concerned, Clym begins searching for Eustacia and Wildeve, who are indeed planning to depart for Budmouth. Clym leaves in the middle of a terrible storm, as do Eustacia and Wildeve.

Thomasin parts ways with Clym. On her way home, she encounters Venn and tells him about Eustacia and Wildeve; Venn offers to escort her home. On their way to the Quiet Woman Inn (Wildeve's inn), Venn and Thomasin come across a distressing scene: Wildeve and Clym have jumped into a pond to rescue Eustacia, who has fallen in. However, the storm has turned the pond into a whirlpool. With the help of some of the locals, Venn manages to get Clym, Wildeve, and Eustacia out of the pond. However, by the time he does so, Eustacia and Wildeve are dead.

In the months following Wildeve and Eustacia's funeral, Venn becomes a dairy farmer and begins courting Thomasin; they eventually marry. Clym, overcome with grief, becomes a traveling preacher. However, the deaths of Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright never stop haunting him.

## *Analysis of Themes*

### Humans vs. Nature

*The Return of the Native* is part of the Naturalism literary movement, which generally elevated and revered the natural world but also portrayed it as fearsome and immensely powerful. As such, the book's setting, Egdon Heath, acts as a character in and of itself. Many passages, including the entire opening chapter of the novel, feature vivid descriptions of the heath. It's vast and beautiful, and it demands the respect of those who live on it. After all, the heath is a dangerous place: wildlife, weather, and darkness all pose a threat. Most of the inhabitants of the heath respect Egdon; they know how dangerous the heath can be and choose to take precautions. For instance, in the



beginning of the novel, Mrs. Yeobright asks Olly to walk with her because she knows it is unsafe to walk alone at night.

However, other characters, particularly Eustacia and Wildeve, choose to disrespect the heath. Eustacia regularly expresses her desire to move away from Egdon because she cannot stand it. She also often walks alone in the darkness, even though she knows it is dangerous. Similarly, Wildeve wants nothing to do with the heath and also chooses to walk alone in the dark. Notably, neither character makes their living off of the land, unlike most of the residents of Egdon. Additionally, both characters share an unearned respect for the modern world, despite never living anywhere except the heath in their lives. Following her failed marriage to Clym, Eustacia decides that she cannot stand the heath any longer and asks Wildeve to help her escape. Wildeve agrees, and the two of them choose a particularly dark and stormy night to travel, once again disregarding the rules of the heath. This decision leads to both of their deaths, as Eustacia and Wildeve find themselves at the bottom of a whirlpool. Ultimately, then, *The Return of the Native* cautions against disrespect or arrogance toward the natural world, as humans are no match for nature's sublime power.

### Modernity vs. Tradition

There is a conflict staged in *The Return of the Native* between Egdon Heath and the modern world. Egdon Heath is described in the beginning of the novel as a timeless place that modernity has yet to touch, making it a rather unusual location. It's a place that's still steeped in history, as many of its inhabitants believe in old folklore and perform traditional work that some might view as antiquated. Venn, for example, is a reddleman (someone who sells red coloring that farmers use to mark their sheep). The book describes him as "one of a class rapidly becoming extinct in Wessex, filling at present in the rural world the place which, during the last century, the dodo occupied in the world of animals. He is a curious, interesting and nearly perished link between obsolete forms of life and those which generally prevail." In other words, Venn persists in his work despite the fact that the trade—and the entire way of life it represents—is becoming "obsolete" in the face of industrialization. Moreover, the several community celebrations that

take place throughout the novel (like the Guy Fawkes Day bonfire and the May Day festival) are important, long-held rituals that connect characters with one another and with their shared heritage.

That said, Clym's return from Paris (a modernized city) poses a threat to the traditional way of life in Egdon Heath. Although Clym does not like Paris well enough to return to it, he does want to open a school in Egdon and educate its inhabitants—in effect, he wants to modernize them. However, Egdon and its inhabitants refuse to be modernized. When Clym suggests to Fairway, one of the locals, that he wants to start a school in Egdon, Fairway remarks that "he'll never carry it out." Indeed, Fairway turns out to be correct; Clym begins to lose his eyesight and never manages to recover. Instead, like the other residents of Egdon, he makes his living off the land as a furze-cutter—that is, someone who harvests furze, a plant to feed livestock. As such, Egdon remains untouched by the modern world. Not only that, but it also claims a so-called "modern man," in the form of Clym, as one of its own. In this way, *The Return of the Native* advocates for the continued existence of places like Egdon Heath, a rural town that's managed to resist modern influences and hold onto its time-honored traditions.

### Class and Morality

One's occupation and class are crucial factors when considering marriage proposals on Egdon Heath. Much of the drama of the first half of the novel revolves around Mrs. Yeobright's feelings that her son, Clym, and her niece, Thomasin, are not marrying people who are of a high enough social standing. Mrs. Yeobright's displeasure with Thomasin and Wildeve's marriage leads Wildeve back to Eustacia. Meanwhile, her problem with Clym and Eustacia's marriage drives a permanent wedge between herself and her son. However, a peculiar feature of Mrs. Yeobright's character is that she actually married a dairy farmer who would've been below her rank in the social hierarchy, at least according to Captain Vye. It is unclear whether she is being hypocritical or if she just doesn't want her relatives to make the same mistake that she did. Of course, though Mrs. Yeobright's classism is responsible for many issues in the novel, she also ends up being correct about her relatives' marriages, as both start and end in disasters.

However, *The Return of the Native* does not go so far as to reward Mrs. Yeobright's classist attitude. In fact, it shows how a single-minded focus on wealth and social status can be harmful. Eustacia, for instance, manipulates and betrays her lovers throughout the book: she chooses Wildeve over Venn because he's of a higher social class, but then she abandons Wildeve for Clym because she (falsely) believes that Clym can give her a refined Parisian lifestyle. Another example of this sort of moral corruption happens toward the end of the book, when Wildeve inherits a fortune from a deceased relative. However, his sudden acquisition of wealth does not make him more virtuous, nor does it make him treat Thomasin any better. If anything, his money makes him more of a problem, because he now feels justified in keeping Thomasin as his wife and Eustacia as his mistress. As such, *The Return of the Native* ultimately argues that wealth is a useful tool, but not one that is synonymous with virtue.

### Deception

Deception is an important feature of *The Return of the Native*, which sees several of its characters suffer the negative consequences of lies and deceit. In particular, Wildeve and Eustacia build their relationship on a faulty foundation. Both play with each other's emotions and withhold how they truly feel: Wildeve refuses to let Eustacia know how he feels about her compared to Thomasin, and, in return, Eustacia doesn't tell Wildeve that she still loves him. Eustacia and Wildeve's unhealthy relationship comes to a head when their feelings for each other indirectly contribute to the death of Mrs. Yeobright (Eustacia's husband, Clym's, mother). Eustacia refuses to let Mrs. Yeobright inside the house because she and Wildeve are talking inside, and she doesn't want Mrs. Yeobright to think they're having an affair. And, as a result, Mrs. Yeobright is forced to walk home and suffers a fatal snakebite on the way. In hopes that she can keep Clym from learning the truth about his mother's death, Eustacia withholds the fact that she did not open the door for Mrs. Yeobright—and when the truth comes out, Clym divorces Eustacia. As such, Eustacia's deception ends up hurting everyone involved, including herself.

In addition to deceiving others, Eustacia also struggles with self-deception. Often, Eustacia has a difficult time disentangling fantasy from reality. For instance, it does not appear that she meant to trick Clym into taking her to Paris (her dream of escaping to Paris what attracts her to Clym in the first place). Rather, it seems she genuinely believed he would eventually take her there, despite all signs pointing the opposite way. Like with her deception of others, Eustacia's self-deceptive ways only result in more misery for her and those she loves. Her sham relationship with Clym hurts Wildeve and, in the end, hurts Eustacia herself, since the marriage ends in divorce. Although dishonesty and delusion perhaps save Eustacia from disappointment or other people's disapproval in the short term, this sort of behavior always backfires in the end. All in all, then, the novel shows how lying and withholding information can destroy lives, and it implicitly suggests that facing the truth and communicating openly with others would be a better long-term strategy.

## *Style*

Hardy's narrative style makes use of several kinds of imagery, including a number of figures of speech using analogies drawn from the setting of his story. Consider such a sampling as the following: "Eustacia's journey was at first as vague in direction as that of thistledown in the wind"; "the party had marched in trail, like a traveling flock of sheep; that is to say, the strongest first, the weak and young behind"; "[Grandfer Cantle] also began to sing, in the voice of a bee up a flue"; "Grandfer Cantle meanwhile staring at [Christian] as a hen stares at the duck she has hatched"; "in her winter dress, as now, [Eustacia] was like the tiger-beetle, which, when observed in dull situations, seems to be of the quietest neutral color, but under a full illumination blazes with dazzling splendor"; "[the settle] is, to the hearths of old-fashioned cavernous fireplaces, what the last belt of trees is to the exposed country estate, or the north wall to the garden"; "[Clym] longed for death, as a field laborer longs for the shade"; "Fairway gave a circular motion to the rope, as if he were stirring a batter"; "[Eustacia] had entered the dance from the troubled hours of her late life as one might enter a brilliant chamber after a night walk in a wood"; "the leaves of the hollyhocks hung like half-closed umbrellas." In the first of these, the term carrying the analogy comes from nature; in the second, from the characters' daily activities on the heath.

In short, Hardy's imagery is appropriate to the world of his story and effective in conveying what, at a given moment, he wishes to show, not merely say.

## *Setting*

Egdon Heath lends itself very well to the kind of story Hardy wanted to tell in the novel. It is meant as a tragedy, at least through the original five books, and the "gaunt waste" provides an appropriate setting. It is also a convenient microcosm, limited in physical extent and containing all types of human beings. Both its history and its character can be made meaningful parts of the story. Indeed, some critics go so far as to look upon Egdon as a character like any other in the novel. To do so, however, is to ignore the usual expectations the reader has of the nature of any novel.

The characters in Hardy's novel can be grouped by their attitudes toward the heath. Clym, Mrs. Yeobright, Thomasin, and Venn are products of Egdon and understand it: Clym is frequently shown, for instance, to have an intimate knowledge of its natural features; Thomasin, though well off after her husband dies, has no desire to leave it; Venn is shown to be so familiar with it that at night he can walk at full speed across it without losing his footing. On the other hand, both Eustacia and Wildeve look upon the heath as a place to leave with all deliberate speed, making it ironical and appropriate that both should die in a stream near Shadwater Weir.

## *Adaptations*

- ❖ *The Return of the Native* was filmed for [Hallmark Hall of Fame](#) and broadcast on television in 1994. It was filmed in [Exmoor](#) National Park. The film stars [Catherine Zeta Jones](#) as Eustacia Vye, [Clive Owen](#) as Damon Wildeve, [Ray Stevenson](#) as Clym Yeobright, and [Joan Plowright](#) as Mrs. Yeobright. [Jack Gold](#) directed.
- ❖ In 2010 an Americanised film adaptation of *The Return of the Native* was directed by [Ben Westbrook](#). It is set in the [Appalachian](#) Mountains in the 1930s during The [Great Depression](#).
- ❖ The novel has also been adapted for the stage several times. *Dance on a Country Grave* is a musical stage adaptation by Kelly Hamilton.
- ❖ On June 15, 1948 a radio adaptation featuring [Michael Redgrave](#) aired on CBS's *Studio One*.



## Critical Overview

Before it was even published as a novel, *The Return of the Native* had already been rejected by Leslie Stephen, the editor of the prestigious *Cornhill Magazine*. Stephen objected to the hint of ex-tramarital sex and found it inappropriate for a family magazine. The serial ran in *Belgravia*, which, according to Desmond Hawkins, Hardy found to be an inferior publication.

The initial critical response to the novel was mixed. A review in *Athenaeum* deemed it "distinctly inferior to anything of his we have yet read." The reviewer also took issue with the language used by the characters, which seemed "pitched throughout in too high a key to suit the talkers." That same month critic W. E. Henley reviewed the book in *The Academy*. He found the work highly artificial but was reluctant to say so, because Hardy himself seemed sincere. On a positive note, he praised the opening descriptions of the heath and of Eustacia to be among the best things written in the English language—but that was not enough to make up for the weaknesses. Henley summarized all that was good and bad about Hardy's work in one seemingly endless sentence:

*... that he rarely makes you laugh and never makes you cry, and that his books are valuable and interesting rather as the outcome of a certain mind than as pictures of society or studies in human nature; that his tragedy is arbitrary and accidental rather than heroic and inevitable; and that, rare artist as he is, there is something wanting in his personality, and he is not quite a great man.*

### **AD**

More than a decade later, Francis Adams pointed out the same strengths and weaknesses. Of Hardy's characterization of the dialogue of country maids, he wrote, "Nothing more ridiculous than this has been done by any writer of anything approaching ability in our time, and it is as false in characterization as it is absurd in conception." He went on to praise Hardy's artistic gift for making characters' environments reflect in their personalities, "a single harmonious growth of spiritual and natural circumstances."

Negative critical responses did not seem to trouble Hardy as much as the artistic constraints of having to please Victorian sensibilities. In 1894, the first book-length analyses of Hardy's fiction were published: Lionel Johnson's *The Art of Thomas Hardy* and Annie

Macdonell's *Thomas Hardy*. Hardy mentioned them in a letter to a friend that year: "... are too laudatory. They are not in bad taste as a whole, if one concedes that they had to be written, which I do not." It is generally accepted that he wrote no novels after 1895 because of the changes that he had to make to every piece in order to tone down any suggestion of sexual passion.

In the decade after his death, Hardy's reputation declined. His fiction was too outdated to hold much interest—it was half a century since *Return of the Native*, and in the meantime, modernism had redefined literary tastes. T. S. Eliot asserted that Hardy was "indifferent even to the prescripts of good writing: he wrote sometimes overpoweringly well, but always very carelessly; at times his style touches sublimity without ever having passed through the stage of being good."

## Symbolism

The names of Thomas Hardy's characters are almost always symbolic of their functions within his novels, and the names in *The Return of the Native* are no exception. "Wildeva" suggests someone on the verge, or eve, of wildness, while his first name, Damon, is commonplace enough to suggest that he will never break out of the mold.

Eustacia is derived from the word "eustacy," which means a change in the level of the sea all around the world, indicating the immense changes that she is set to bring into the lives of the people on the heath and beyond. It also rings of the prefix "eu-," which has a Latin meaning of "good" and an Old Norse meaning "to want," and from "ecstasy." Her last name, "Vye," indicates the character's combative stance toward the world.

Clym's last name, "Yeobright," combines the word "yeoman" which indicates a servant or underling with the indication of his natural intelligence, or brightness. There are minor characters here also given names that are common words that appear in dictionaries, such as "Nunsuch" (normally spelled "nonesuch"), "Christian," and "Fairway."

## Audiobook

[Visit this web page to read the Novel \[Audiobook\] \(15 hrs\)](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj8O7Wr15mc&ab\\_channel=AudioBooks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj8O7Wr15mc&ab_channel=AudioBooks)

# *The Return of the Native* **FILM**

Please visit these web links to watch the Films:

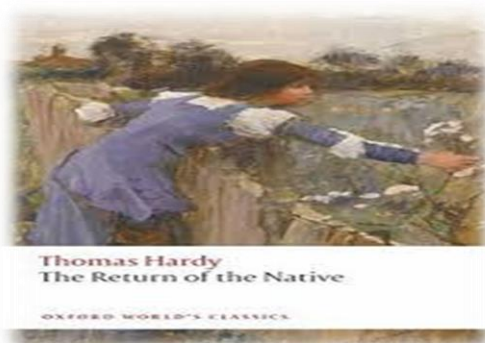
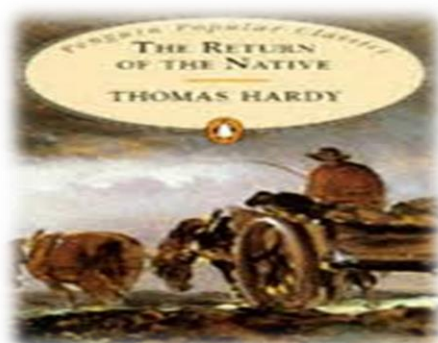
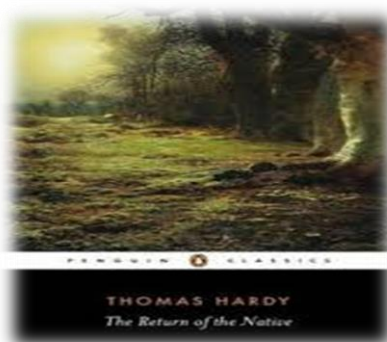
[a] <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1756821/> [2010] (1 h : 34min)

[b] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU5IBh6NaXE&ab\\_channel=Goose](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU5IBh6NaXE&ab_channel=Goose)  
[1994] (1 h : 40 min)

## Some selected Scenes from the Film







# Thomas Hardy

## Through Pictures



Thomas Hardy's House

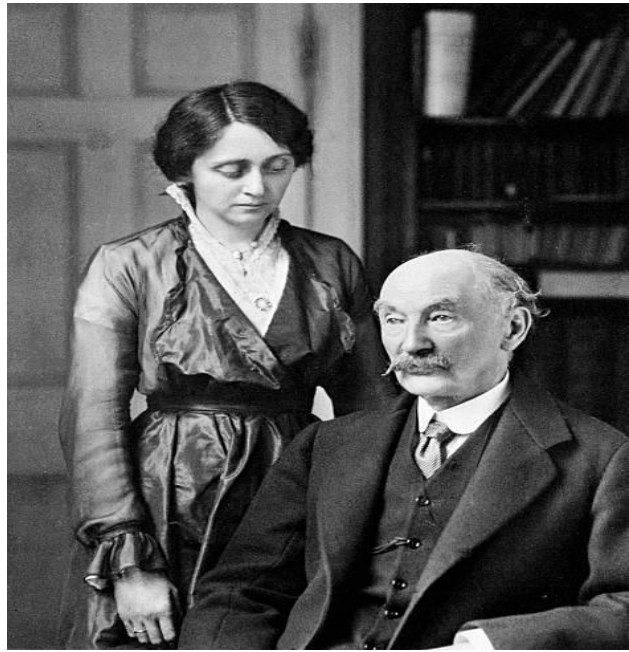


Thomas Hardy honoured [The Order of Merit]





Hardy writing



With his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Florence



Thomas Hardy's Funeral



An urn containing the heart of Thomas Hardy is carried

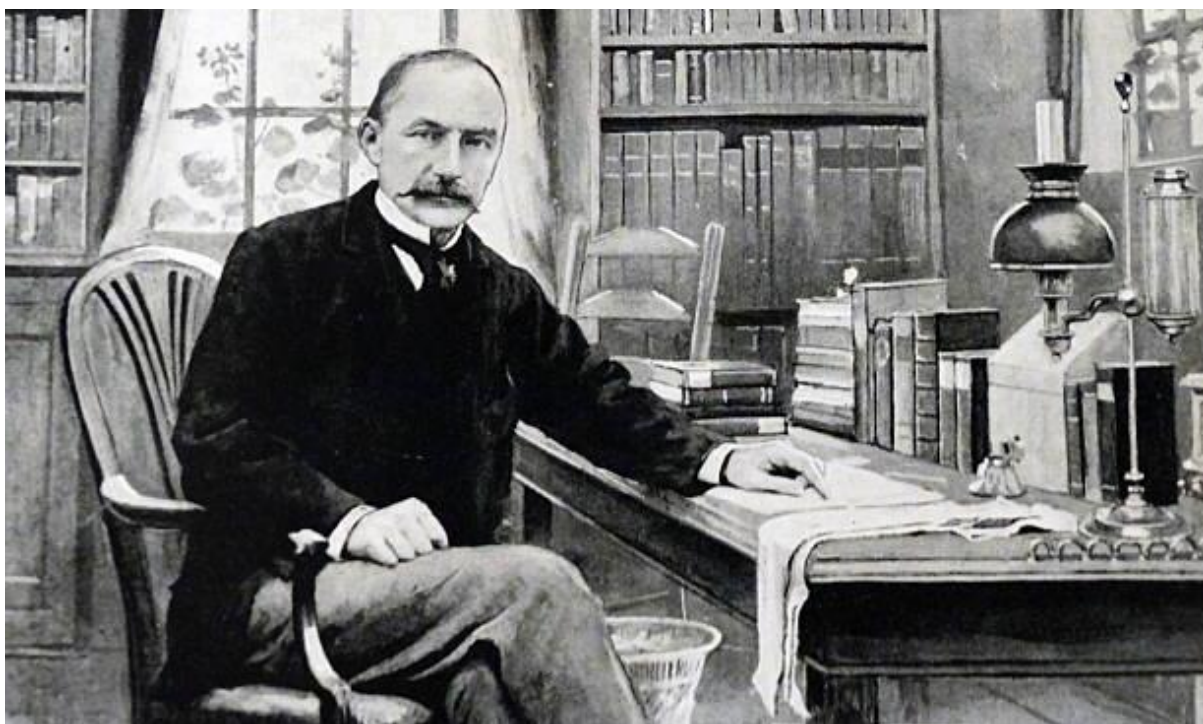


Grave containing the heart of Thomas Hardy





A statue of Thomas Hardy in Dorchester, Dorset, circa 1970.



Thomas Hardy at his study



Thomas Hardy's Study



HOLLYWOOD, CA - MAY 07: (L-R) Actors Mel Gibson, Tom Hardy and Writer/Director/Producer George Miller attend the premiere of Warner Bros. Pictures' "Mad Max: Fury Road" at TCL Chinese Theatre on May 7, 2015 in Hollywood, California.





HOLLYWOOD, CA - MAY 07: (L-R) Actor Hugh Keays-Byrne, Warner Bros. Pictures Worldwide Marketing and International Distribution President Sue Kroll, Warner Bros. Pictures Executive Vice President of Production Courtenay Valenti, Kelly Marcel, Warner Bros. Pictures President of Creative Development and Worldwide Production Greg Silverman, Producer Doug Mitchell, actors Abbey Lee, Riley Keough, Tom Hardy, Writer/Director/Producer George Miller, Megan Gale, Zoe Kravitz, Courtney Eaton, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Megan Gale and Charlize Theron attend the premiere of Warner Bros. Pictures' "Mad Max: Fury Road" at TCL Chinese Theatre on May 7, 2015 in Hollywood, California





(From L) US actress Jessica Chastain, English actor Tom Hardy, Australian musician and writer Nick Cave, Australian director John Hillcoat, US actor Shia LaBeouf, Australian actress Mia Wasikowska, US actor Dane DeHaan, actor Jason Clarke and Australian actor Guy Pearce arrive for the screening of "Lawless" presented in competition at the 65th Cannes film festival on May 19, 2012 in Cannes.

# Quotes

of

## Thomas Hardy

"Though a good deal is too strange to be believed,  
nothing is too strange to have happened."

"They spoke very little of their mutual feeling; pretty phrases and warm expressions being probably unnecessary between such tried friends."

"A strong woman who recklessly throws away her strength, she is worse than a weak woman who has never had any strength to throw away."

"It is difficult for a woman to define her feelings in language which is chiefly made by men to express theirs."

"Happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain."

"Beauty lay not in the thing, but in what the thing symbolized."

"Did it never strike your mind that what every woman says, some women may feel?"

"Love is a possible strength in an actual weakness."

"I shall do one thing in this life - one thing certain - that is, love you, and long for you, and keep wanting you till I die."

"And at home by the fire, whenever you look up there, I shall be  
— and whenever I look up, there will be you."

"Why is it that a woman can see from a distance what a man cannot see close?"

"Ladies know what to guard against, because they read novels that tell them of these tricks..."

"If an offense come out of the truth, better is it that the offense come than that the truth be concealed."

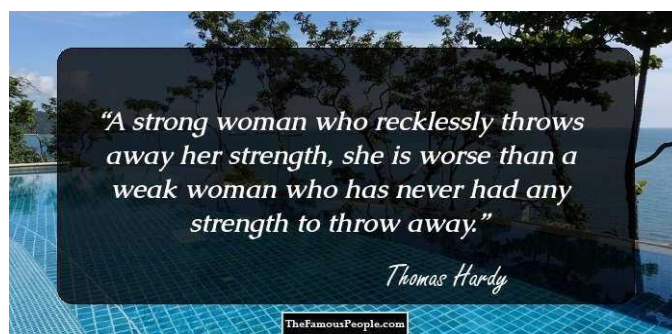
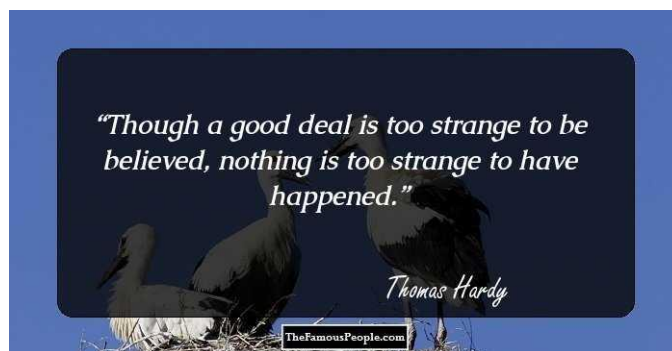
"Sometimes I shrink from your knowing what I have felt for you, and sometimes I am distressed that all of it you will never know."

"A man's silence is wonderful to listen to."

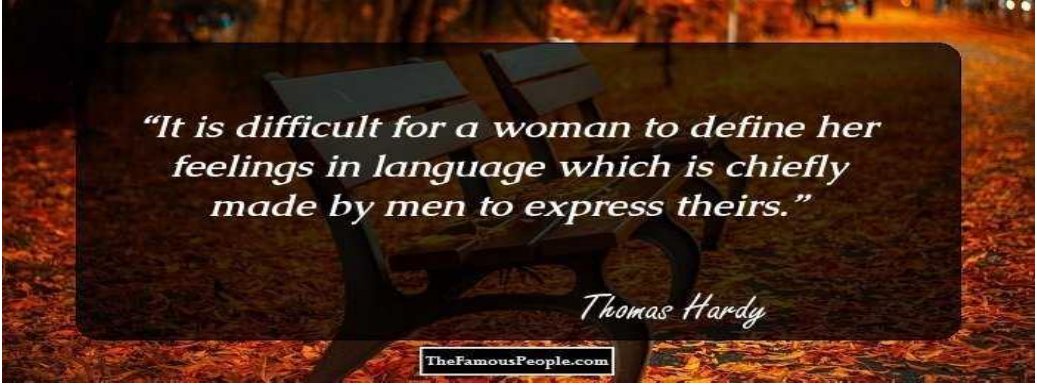
"This hobble of being alive is rather serious, don't you think so?"

"Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change."

"Do not do an immoral thing for moral reasons."



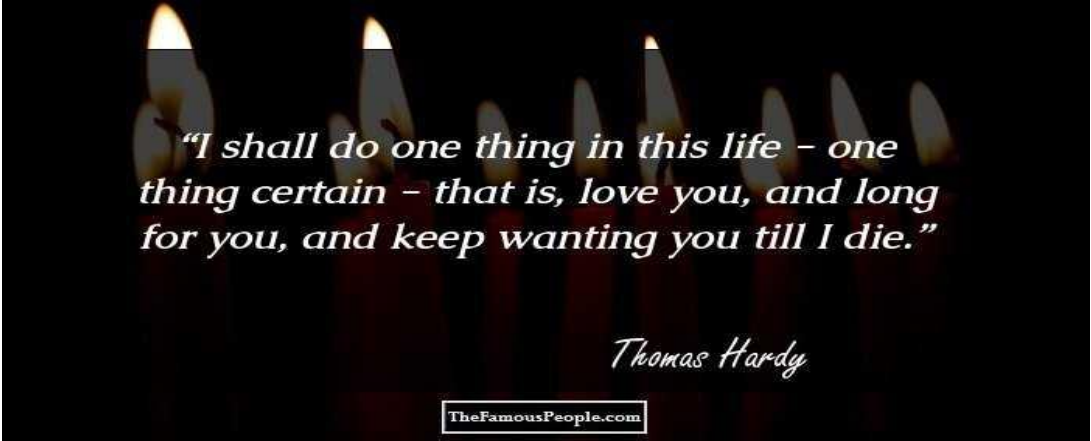




*"It is difficult for a woman to define her feelings in language which is chiefly made by men to express theirs."*

*Thomas Hardy*

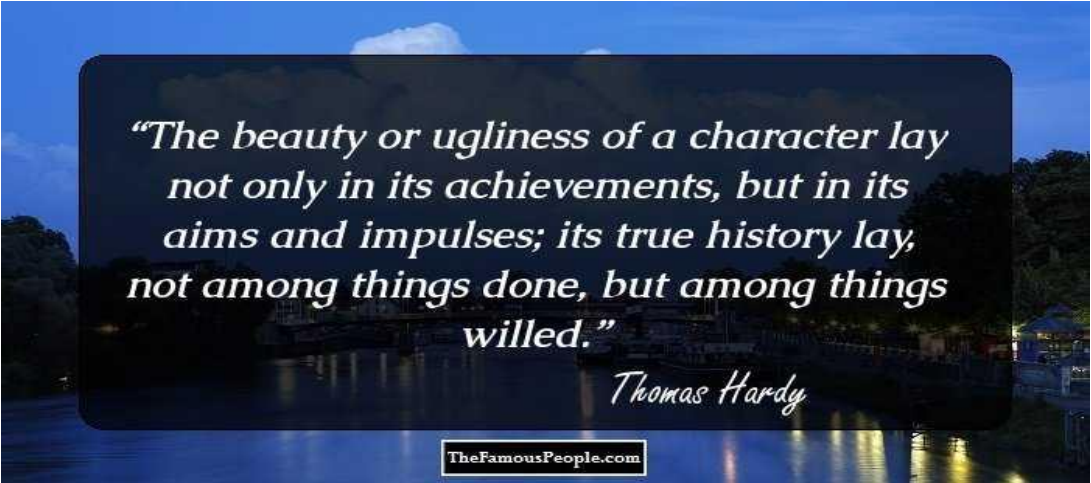
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*"I shall do one thing in this life - one thing certain - that is, love you, and long for you, and keep wanting you till I die."*

*Thomas Hardy*

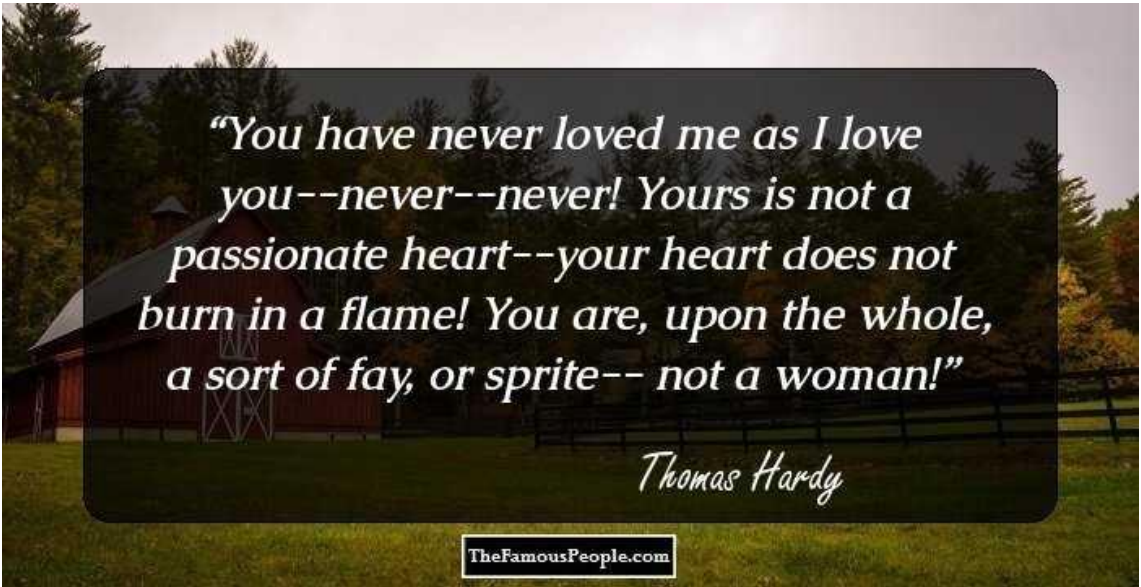
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*"The beauty or ugliness of a character lay not only in its achievements, but in its aims and impulses; its true history lay, not among things done, but among things willed."*

*Thomas Hardy*

TheFamousPeople.com



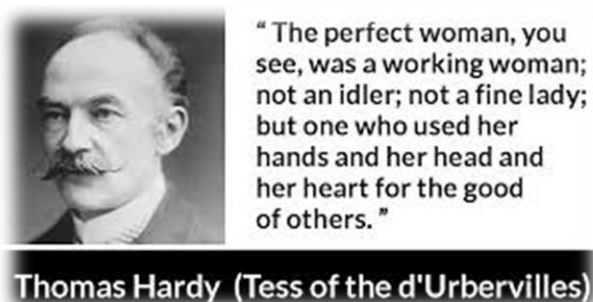
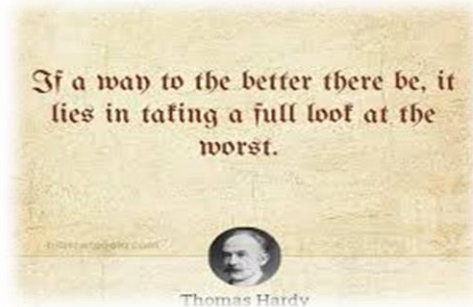
*"You have never loved me as I love you--never--never! Yours is not a passionate heart--your heart does not burn in a flame! You are, upon the whole, a sort of fay, or sprite-- not a woman!"*

*Thomas Hardy*

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# Hardy's Writing Style

For Hardy, "style should be a quality of writing that had to be perfected by each author individually".

Hardy had a pessimist view on life and love. He wrote in variety of genres, from epic drama to cheerful ballads and he use a meticulous description of events and characters that are not limited to humans, and even nature and animals play a role in his works. He uses sexual images in an explicit way and the plot of his novels distinguish his modern style of writing.

With his particular view of love he obtain a poetry different from others poets of his period. As one could appreciate, the sadness of romantic love is one of his main themes.

Many of his works are full of realism and his pessimism "describes nature with its cruelties and difficulties, but never with a sentimental approach"

In terms of grammar, we can see that Hardy used the subjunctive mood to hesitate or make assumptions. He used phrases outdated like "as it were". Furthermore, his works contains long sentences and even, he uses, sometimes, nouns in the position and function of adjectives and verbs.

Thomas introduced in some of his works the Dorset dialect as an example of Old and noble English to prevent it loss.

In terms of poetry, he was inspired a lot in the Elizabethan poetry. Hardy preferred poetry and he wrote verse throughout his life. His pessimist view, which was in contrast with beauty of nature and optimism of Victorians, was against the public taste of his time. Many of his works are based on rural life, his life.

His poetry is full of vitality, versatility, musicality, control of language and poetic adaptation of old ways to new ways of doing poetry. Loneliness is introduced in all the poems and in all the feelings that they arise. All this must be added that

death is very present in many of his poems, especially in his poems about war. An example of this poems about death is *Ah, Are You Digging My Grave?*

"His poems are traditional in form and structure, but also his themes, which as noted, are usually based on the everyday life" . He published about 13 volumes of poetry.

### Poetic style

Hardy is primarily a poet, and nowhere does he have more claims for his recognition as a poet in his fiction than in the imaginative use of style. Here the poet is at his best. His poetic genius coupled with the power of employing imaginative words and phrases has made poetry of his prose. The themes which Hardy employs in his novels are again essentially poetic, as the element of sorrow has always been a spur to the imagination.

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As a poet, Hardy is subjective, and this quality of subjectivity is abundantly found in the style of Hardy. He feels: "The secret of living style lies in not having too much style—in being a little careless, or seeming to be, here and there." Here Hardy's instinct is perhaps correct, for an excess of care in the use of style would check the writer from expressing his best self. As such Duffin calls this style of Hardy as "essentially of the philosophic type." As Lord David Cecil puts it, "You could never mistake a paragraph by Hardy for a paragraph by anybody else. The distinguishing elements in his personality—his integrity, his naivete, his dignity, his strangeness—are present in the turn of his phrases, and to smooth his sentences out into a polished level of perfection would involve obliterating the mark of Hardy's signature.".

The style of Hardy varies from place to place to suit the mode of the author. He may be clumsy and coarse yet he is imaginative and a poet in the expression of his

views; at times he is colourful and at others he uses a naked and bold style yet full of altitudian grandeur. His style answers to the various and shifting moods and natures of his characters. With passionate and loving character, it is always a colourful style; with pastoral folk it is purely native and dialectical. It is also of different types as the changing situation—humorous, soft, stirring, tragic, satirical—present themselves upon the screen.

A notable thing with Hardy is that like his philosophy his style is not static but dynamic. It has been improving in novel after novel. In the first two novels *Far From the Madding Crowd* and *The Woodlanders* it is predominantly pastoral; in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native* there is a leaning towards the tragic though coupled with pastoral but in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Jude the Obscure* the earlier note is entirely discarded and is replaced by the tragic wedded with an amount of cynicism. The remark of Duffin is apt; "It may be said of Hardy, as Dryden said of Shakespeare in a slightly different connection, that he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him," and these great occasions are to be found either in the opening or in the closing chapters of his books especially of his novels *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *The Return of the Native* and *Tess*.

But above all, the fact remains that Hardy is a poet and this poetic gift of imaginativeness is seen even in the choice of his words and phrases, in the exactitude of his similes and quotations and in the adroit skill of the movement of the rhythms. He knows the skill of "one-word expression as Eustacia's eyes is "pagan" or Henchard's garden is silent, dewy and full of perfume" or such imaginative phrases as "boisterous tosses of the foam". "The image always presents itself before Hardy's inward eye" before it is put to pen. "If a vehicle passes a window, Hardy is in the room and knows what effect its passing has on the light." The rhythm of his prose may be rugged and harsh but the very harshness and ruggedness in it, when timely repeated, become rhythmic.

But his imagination is not always for the good. The excess of it has brought its disadvantages too which are obvious and hard to be denied. He is primarily wanting in the logical construction of his phrases and sentences. The poet sometimes

ousts the intellectual in him with the consequent loss of craftsmanship which are the distinguishing qualities of all great novelists like Gustave Flaubert of Maupassant. Further his style becomes rambling. For a single and direct expression, he will waste, like Ruskin a number of words and with no effect. He will shun an expression like "apparently just beneath his feet" for an indirect expression like "visually just past his toes and under his feet". Bathsheba is not merely shy but, "not a point in the milkmaid was of the deepest rose colour." Sometimes he takes the strange liberty of a poet, that of coining new words or interpreting words in his own way; there is "domicile" for house or "habiliments" for clothes but he crosses limits when he coins such an expression as "habilimental taste" to say "the choice of dress." Very often, as Lord David Cecil remarks, "he cannot manage the ordinary syntax and grammar of the English language."

What place does Hardy occupy then in the galaxy of the great stylists? Hardy owes some debt to some of the great stylists whom he studied in order to improve his style. He names such prose writers as Defoe, Addison, Burke, Gibbon, Lamb and others; but surely the reader will be disappointed if he tries to discover in him a trace of any of these writers. For him style was but merely a means to an end. His style, therefore, is not without its faults and consequently not great. Duffin also remarks that Hardy was not a born master of style like Thackeray nor a made one like Stevenson. Like some good orators he require 'a stimulant before eloquence is forthcoming' and to this end even Lord David Cecil observes: "Hardy writes clumsily but he writes creatively."

### Subjectivity

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his sentences out into a polished level of perfection would involve obliterating the mark of Hardy's signature."

### Style to suit situation

The style of Hardy varies from place to place to suit the mode of the author. He may be clumsy and coarse yet he is imaginative and a poet in the expression of his views; at times he is colourful and at others he uses a naked and bold style yet full of altitudinal grandeur. His style answers to the various and shifting moods and natures of his characters. With passionate and loving character it is always a colourful style; with pastoral folk it is purely native and dialectical. It is also of different types as the changing situation—humorous, soft, stirring, tragic, satirical—present themselves upon the screen.

### Dynamic style.

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### Rhythmic prose

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passes a window, Hardy is in the room and knows what effect its passing has on the light." The rhythm of his prose may be rugged and harsh but the very harshness and ruggedness in it, when timely repeated, become rhythmic.

### Defects of style

But his imagination is not always for the good. The excess of it has brought its disadvantages too which are obvious and hard to be denied. He is primarily wanting in the logical construction of his phrases and sentences. The poet sometimes ousts the intellectual in him with the consequent loss of craftsmanship which are the distinguishing qualities of all great novelists like Gustave Flaubert of Maupassant. Further his style becomes rambling. For a single and direct expression he will waste, like Ruskin a number of words and with no effect. He will shun an expression like "apparently just beneath his feet" for an indirect expression like "visually just past his toes and under his feet". Bathsheba is not merely shy but, "not a point in the milkmaid was of the deepest rose colour." Sometimes he takes the strange liberty of a poet, that of coining new words or interpreting words in his own way; there is "domicile" for house or "habiliments" for clothes but he crosses limits when he coins such an expression as "habilimental taste" to say "the choice of dress." Very often, as Lord David Cecil remarks, "he cannot manage the ordinary syntax and grammar of the English language."

### Conclusion

What place does Hardy occupy then in the galaxy of the great stylists? Hardy owes some debt to some of the great stylists whom he studied in order to improve his style. He names such prose writers as Defoe, Addison, Burke, Gibbon, Lamb and others; but surely the reader will be disappointed if he tries to discover in him a trace of any of these writers. For him style was but merely a means to an end. His style, therefore, is not without its faults and consequently not great. Duffin also remarks that Hardy was not a born master of style like Thackeray nor a made one like Stevenson. Like some good orators he requires 'a stimulant before eloquence is forthcoming' and to this end even Lord David Cecil observes: "Hardy writes clumsily but he writes creatively."

# Literary Themes

## Thomas Hardy

Resource: <https://victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/pval83.html>

### Themes in the Works of Thomas Hardy

In Hardy, theme (a unifying observation about the human condition) is generally implicit (understood) rather than explicit (overt or stated). Rarely is a Hardy theme as easily stated as "The virtuous though humble will inevitably triumph over the corrupt, greedy, and oppressive of the middle and upper classes," a statement that would be satisfactory for Victorian melodramas such as *Black-Ey'd Susan; or, All in the Downs* and *The Rent Day*. The triumph of Dick Dewey over his higher-class rivals Farmer Shiner and the minister for the hand of Fancy Day in *Under the Greenwood Tree*, although it is one of Hardy's simplest prose narratives, cannot be stated so simply, for example, because personal as well as class issues occupy the minds of the young lovers. Although it is almost axiomatic that the briefer a work, the simpler its theme, and that the longer the work the greater the number of themes it is likely to embrace, even a relatively short Hardy poem such as "The Channel Firing" is likely to communicate a number of observations about or insights into human nature: "The dead regret their inability to advise, correct, or reprove the living," "God, knowing all, cannot help but be a little cynical about human morality," and "Nominally Christians, by the early twentieth century, Europeans had permitted militant nationalism to overwhelm any recognition of Christ's teachings" are but three possible statements of theme that logically arise from several readings of "The Channel Firing." Conversely, in a short story considerably longer than the poem, "A Tradition of 1804," Hardy is ironically observing that, when one has the chance to seize a significant opportunity (here, the assassination of Napoleon), he may well lack the means (a suitable firearm).

However, before we can accurately examine any Hardy text for its themes, we must first determine the meaning of the term "theme." Since a student's knowledge of literary terms should gradually become more sophisticated over the secondary grades, studying a novel such as *Tess of*

*the d'Urbervilles* in the senior year a student cannot appraise the themes of the novel with the limited definition of "theme" given in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*.

*N.* Subject on which one speaks, writes, or thinks; school composition, essay, on given subject; (gram.) Stem of noun or verb, part to which inflexions are added; (mus.) Melodic subject usu. developed with variations; (hist.) any of 29 provinces in Byzantine empire; ~song, recurrent melody in musical play or film. [Middle English, from Latin from Greek *thema -matos* (*tithemi* set, place); partly through Old French].

Junior secondary English students often tend to think of the theme of a literary work as a single word, such as "War," "Friendship," or (at best) a phrase such as "The anxieties of romantic love." In fact, in formulating the theme of a literary work, the student should pick the central insight--for example, in "The Channel Firing," Hardy uses the dialogue among the dead and God to point out that the world hasn't changed fundamentally because humanity, despite its technological sophistication, has not developed morally or spiritually and still relies on violence to solve its disputes because all too often it is blinded by anger and hatred, as suggested by "all nations striving strong to make Red war yet redder." Words such as "war" or "hatred," however, are mere *motifs*, frequently recurring elements or ideas that may form the basis for a statement of theme. As Laurence Perrine explains in *Story and Structure* (1959),

The THEME of a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is the unifying generalization about life stated or implied by the story. To derive the theme of a story, we must ask what its central purpose is: what view of life it supports or what insight into life it reveals. [117]

To illustrate the concept, Perrine offers the following joke:

"Daughter, your young man stays until a very late hour. Hasn't your mother said anything to you about this habit of his?"

"Yes, father. Mother says men haven't altered a bit."

Consider how many themes (or, more properly, how many statements of theme) we might generate if we each wrote down what we thought the joke-teller was driving at:

- A. As men grow older, they tend to grow more conservative.
- B. Fathers of daughters are apprehensive about the kinds of young men their daughters date.
- C. Fathers tend to scold their children for doing the very things they themselves once did.

D. Women see men more clearly than men see themselves, and judge them more acutely.

Although it is impossible to determine which of these remarks most accurately reflects the intention or narrative purpose of the joke (or, if you subscribe to hegemony of the author, of the jokester), we recognize that all of the above share certain features:

1. Each is statement, a complete sentence with subject and predicate.
2. Each accounts for the principal elements in the joke, the censorious tone of the father and the witty rejoinder of the daughter.
3. Each is less amusing and far more dry than the joke itself.
4. Each statement is implied by the final line of the joke.
5. No detail within the joke contradicts any of the statements.
6. None of these statements relies upon details not furnished by the joke itself.
7. None of these statements is some familiar adage, proverb, or gnomic remark.
8. Each statement ratifies the opinions of teenaged daughters about their fathers!

Theme, then, is neither a clichéd moral nor a framework on which to hang the other elements of the work; rather, it arises naturally from an interaction of all the other elements of the work: characters, setting, conflict, atmosphere, imagery, symbolism, and even narrative perspective. It is not a preachment such as "people from different social backgrounds and with different career aspirations and life goals should not marry" (*Jude the Obscure*). Tempting as it may be to bring in such biographical details as Hardy's unhappy marriage with Emma, the student must not permit such extraneous matters to colour his or her statement of theme. Even though such a jaded relationship as that of the Henchards at the beginning of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* may be related to the Hardys' marital problems, one should not assume that the persona or narrative voice is that of the historical Thomas Hardy himself. Therefore, it would be unwise to say that in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* the theme concerns the impossibility of finding personal fulfilment inside a conventional marriage—after all, Elizabeth-Jane's and Donald Farfrae's is a conventional marriage, but (insofar as the narrator describes it) it seems happy since the partners are intellectually and emotionally well-matched.

The central theme of the novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* may be as enigmatic as "anything [is] possible at the hands of Time and Chance, except, perhaps, fair play" (Ch. 1). However, the novel's subtitle, *A Study of a Man of Character*, suggests that it must be related to Henchard's capacity for suffering, since for Henchard—in part owing to his failure to communicate his true feelings and to his tendency towards "introspective inflexibility" (an

inability to understand his own motivations)--"happiness [is] but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain" (Ch. 45), for that is the lesson that the youthful Elizabeth-Jane apparently learns from her step-father. And yet the "unbroken tranquility" she enjoys in maturity, as Farfrae's wife, forces her "to wonder at the persistence of the unforeseen. . . ." Thus, Hardy's essentially gloomy, nihilistic view of the human condition colours even the conventional "happy ending" in a second, better marriage that Hardy may have derived from Dickens's *David Copperfield*. Certainly, neither Henchard nor Lucetta realizes any satisfaction from an existence (and, apparently, a pleasant existence socially and materially) founded on a lie. Both characters' fates illustrate the pattern of a secret in the past unexpectedly being brought to light and blighting present happiness. Lucetta refuses to "be a slave to the past" (Ch. 25), and determines to bury the secret of her former relationship with Henchard (and, therefore, her social obligation to marry him) in order to satisfy her present passion. Similarly, Henchard's lying to Newsome about the death of Elizabeth-Jane is directly responsible for her rejection of him. Elizabeth-Jane and Farfrae both escape the tragedy because, although they too are guilty of minor duplicities, they are essentially altruistic and "single-hearted." It is not enough, Hardy seems to imply in this novel, to meet the vicissitudes of life heroically or defiantly--one must do so with love, compassion, and charity.

Again, in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, there are a number of themes, but a single unifying principle of (or observation about) human existence emerges from the relationships of the principal characters. Although suffering and death are inevitable, Angel Clare through his lack of empathy for Tess on their wedding night and his apparent rejection of her (as suggested by his trip to Brazil) brings upon Tess more suffering than she deserves and unwittingly drives her towards the final catastrophe, the murder of Alec D'Urberville. Only after it is too late does Angel, realising Tess's true worth, accept responsibility for his own actions. Tess is an odd combination of contraries: a fatalistic who nevertheless struggles for happiness and fulfilment in a world bent on denying her both. This attitude is summed up in her remarking at Stonehenge "This happiness could not have lasted" (Ch. 58). Like Tess, each of us is defined by our past, which (together with our upbringing and social pressures) limits our choices and conditions the kind of people we become. And yet, Tess struggles against the past and believes she has the power to overcome it; this belief may be a phantasm, but holding fast to it is what makes Tess worthy of our sympathy, for it lies at the core of her personal heroism...

In brief, then, there must be a statement with a complete subject and predicate, and it must be a generalization about life or human nature that is clearly supported by the text and that contains the unifying and central concept of the work. While this thematic statement should account for all



the major details of the text, it should not be contradicted by any of these major details and should not rely upon supposed facts. For example, if a student, having read Hardy's "The Three Strangers," were to say that "From the first for the Fennels' visitors the 'hangman's horror' hovers about the mysterious stranger in cinder-grey," the student should not go so far as suggesting that the other visitors immediately realize that the second stranger is the hangman from Casterbridge Gaol. Although there is never just a single correct statement of theme, various critics' statements of theme may isolate certain common features, such as the economic hardships that have resulted in Timothy Summers' becoming a criminal in "The Three Strangers." Finally, students should avoid making thematic statements that tend reduce theme to some familiar saying, such as (with respect to Summers' appearing to be a countryman rather than a middle-class urbanite because of his fustian clothing and hobnailed boots) "You can't judge a book by its cover."

### Hardy's Literary Themes

*Considered a Victorian realist, Hardy examines the social constraints on the lives of those living in Victorian England, and criticises those beliefs, especially those relating to marriage, education and religion, that limited people's lives and caused unhappiness. Such unhappiness, and the suffering it brings, is seen by poet Philip Larkin as central in Hardy's works:*

*"What is the intensely maturing experience of which Hardy's modern man is most sensible? In my view it is suffering, or sadness, and extended consideration of the centrality of suffering in Hardy's work should be the first duty of the true critic for which the work is still waiting [. . .] Any approach to his work, as to any writer's work, must seek first of all to determine what element is peculiarly his, which imaginative note he strikes most plangently, and to deny that in this case it is the sometimes gentle, sometimes ironic, sometimes bitter but always passive apprehension of suffering is, I think, wrong-headed."*

*In *Two on a Tower*, for example, Hardy takes a stand against these rules of society with a story of love that crosses the boundaries of class. The reader is forced to reconsider the conventions set up by society for the relationships between men and women. Nineteenth-century society had conventions, which were enforced. In this novel Swithin St Cleeve's idealism pits him against such contemporary social constraints.*

*In a novel structured around contrasts, the main opposition is between Swithin St Cleeve and Lady Viviette Constantine, who are presented as binary figures in a series of ways: aristocratic and lower class, youthful and mature, single and married, fair and dark, religious and agnostic...she [Lady Viviette Constantine] is also deeply conventional, absurdly wishing to conceal their marriage until Swithin has achieved social status through his scientific work, which gives rise to uncontrolled ironies and tragic-comic misunderstandings.*

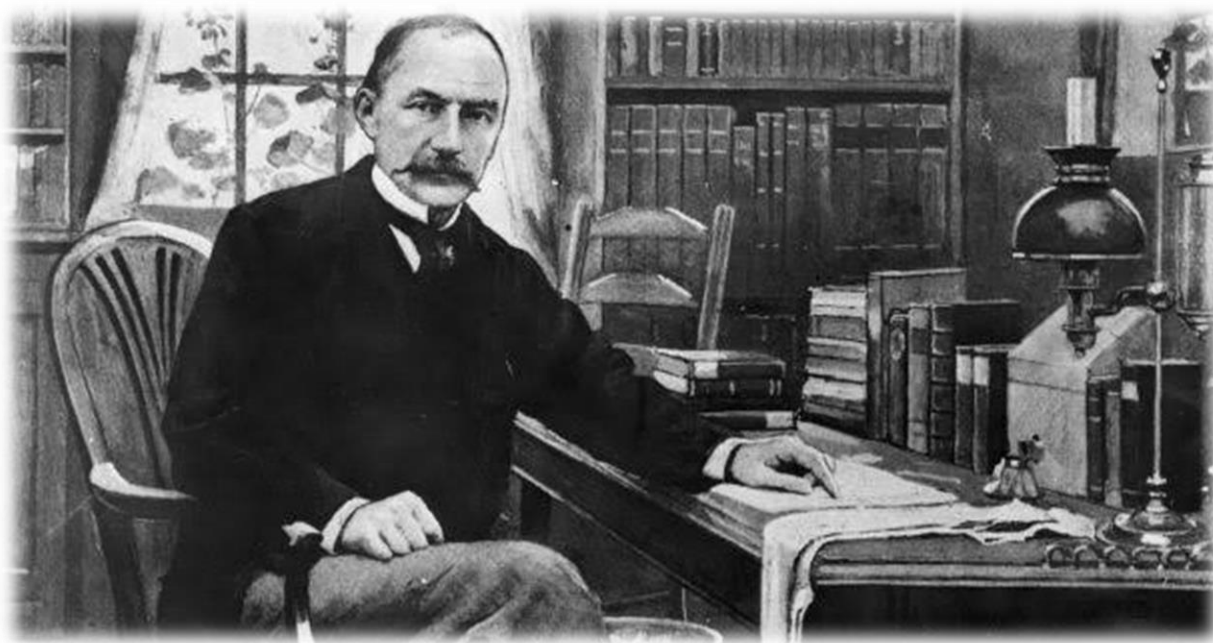
*Fate or chance is another important theme. Hardy's characters often encounter crossroads on a journey, a junction that offers alternative physical destinations but which is also symbolic of a point of opportunity and transition, further*

suggesting that fate is at work. *Far from the Madding Crowd* is an example of a novel in which chance has a major role: "Had Bathsheba not sent the valentine, had Fanny not missed her wedding, for example, the story would have taken an entirely different path." Indeed, Hardy's main characters often seem to be held in fate's overwhelming grip.

Please visit the following web page to know more about Thomas Hardy:

<https://victorianweb.org/authors/hardy/index.html>

01] Biography	09] Visual Arts
02] Religion	10] Characterisation
03] Works	11] Plot & Structure
04] A Hardy Gallery	12] Theme & Subject
05] Politics	13] Image & Symbol
06] Gender Matter	14] Web Resources
07] Genre & Style	15] Bibliography
08] Literary Relations	16] Victorian Web



# Hardy's Poetry

<https://www.hardysociety.org/life/poems/>

{One can reach his 947 poems}

Here one can download copies of all of Hardy's 947 poems.

Some of Hardy's best-known poetry:

- 001 Domicilium 24 kb
- 119 The Darkling Thrush 24.5 kb
- 248 The Convergence of the Twain 22 kb
- 261 Wessex Heights 23 kb
- 292 At Castle Boterel 22 kb

## Thomas Hardy: An Introduction

Thomas Hardy, the son of a stonemason, was born in Upper Bockhampton, near Dorchester, in 1840. At eight years of age, he went to the local school. His mother was determined that he had a good education, and after a year arranged for him to study Latin, French and German at a school in Dorchester.

At the age of 16, he was articled to John Hicks, an architect. Once qualified, he moved to London and found work with a company that specialized in church architecture. In his spare-time he continued his education with visits to the theatre, opera and art galleries. It was at this time he began to write poetry, and although he submitted them to several magazines, they were all rejected.

Hardy's first novel, *Desperate Memories*, was published in 1871. The book received little attention from the critics and sold badly. So did his next two novels, *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1873) and *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1872).

Hardy's first success came in 1874 with the serialization of *Far From the Madding Crowd* in the *Cornhill Magazine*. This was followed by other popular novels such as *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *The Well-Beloved* (1892) and *Jude the Obscure* (1896).

Although *Jude the Obscure* sold over 20,000 copies in three months, Hardy was upset by the reviews the book received. He commented that he had reached

"the end of prose" and now concentrated on poetry. Over the next thirty years Hardy published eight volumes: *Wessex Poems* (1898), *Poems of the Past and Present* (1902), *Time's Laughingstocks* (1909), *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), *Moments of Vision* (1917), *Late Lyrics* (1922), *Human Shows* (1925), *Winter Words* (1928). This was to be his last publication as he died the same year.

## Poetry: An Introduction

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Thomas Hardy in 1922

In 1898, Hardy published his first volume of poetry, *Wessex Poems*, a collection of poems written over 30 years. While some suggest that Hardy gave up writing novels following the harsh criticism of *Jude the Obscure* in 1896, the poet C. H. Sisson calls this "hypothesis" "superficial and absurd". In the twentieth century Hardy published only poetry.

Thomas Hardy wrote in a great variety of poetic forms, including lyrics, ballads, satire, dramatic monologues, and dialogue, as well as a three-volume epic closet drama *The Dynasts* (1904–08), and though in some ways a very traditional poet, because he was influenced by folksong and ballads, he "was never conventional," and "persistently experiment[ed] with different, often invented, stanza forms and metres, and made use of "rough-hewn rhythms and colloquial diction".

Hardy wrote a number of significant war poems that relate to both the Boer Wars and World War I, including "Drummer Hodge", "In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'", and "The Man He Killed"; his work had a profound influence on other war poets such as Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon. Hardy in these poems often used the viewpoint of ordinary soldiers and their colloquial speech. A theme in the *Wessex Poems* is the long shadow that the Napoleonic Wars cast over the 19th century, as seen, for example, in "The Sergeant's Song" and "Leipzig". The Napoleonic War is the subject of *The Dynasts*.

Some of Hardy's more famous poems are from "Poems of 1912–13", part of *Satires of Circumstance* (1914), written following the death of his wife Emma in 1912. They had been estranged for 20 years, and these lyric poems express deeply felt "regret and

remorse". Poems like "After a Journey", "The Voice", and others from this collection "are by general consent regarded as the peak of his poetic achievement" In a recent biography on Hardy, Claire Tomalin argues that Hardy became a truly great English poet after the death of his first wife Emma, beginning with these elegies, which she describes as among "the finest and strangest celebrations of the dead in English poetry."



A portrait of Thomas Hardy in 1923

Many of Hardy's poems deal with themes of disappointment in love and life, and "the perversity of fate", but the best of them present these themes with "a carefully controlled elegiac feeling". Irony is an important element in a number of Hardy's poems, including "The Man He Killed" and "Are You Digging on My Grave". A few of Hardy's poems, such as "The Blinded Bird", a melancholy polemic against the sport of vinkenzetting, reflect his firm stance against animal cruelty, exhibited in his antivivisectionist views and his membership in The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

A number of notable English composers, including Gerald Finzi, Benjamin Britten, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Gustav Holst, set poems by Hardy to music. Holst also wrote the orchestral tone poem *Egdon Heath: A Homage to Thomas Hardy* in 1927.

Although his poems were initially not as well received as his novels had been, Hardy is now recognised as one of the great poets of the 20th century, and his verse had a profound influence on later writers, including Robert Frost, W. H. Auden, Dylan Thomas, and Philip Larkin. Larkin included 27 poems by Hardy compared with only nine by T. S. Eliot in his edition of the *Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse* in 1973. There were fewer poems by W. B. Yeats.

## An Analysis of his Poems

To have a critical and important analysis of his poems, the following aspects may be helpful and useful.



- Thomas Hardy, English novelist and poet, was born near Dorchester in England. He was one of the great English writers of the 19th and early 20th century.
- Hardy's father was a stonemason and influenced Thomas to take up a career as an architect. Gothic architecture influenced Hardy's poetry. It provided a powerful model for artistic unity and complexity in his works.
- Hardy derived a love of music from his father and a devotion to literature from his mother. She introduced him to all the folk songs and legends of the Dorchester region as well as to Latin poets and French Romances.
- He learned French, German, and Latin, sometimes self-taught.
- Hardy could not afford to study at university. Instead he was apprenticed to a church architect and worked at this trade until he was 34.
- Hardy wrote continually during the architect phase of his life. He wrote unpublished poems which idealized the rural life. He wrote serialised novels.
- Success with serialised novels allowed him to give up the architect trade in 1874 and to marry the same year.
- Over the next 22 years Hardy wrote many novels, all set in the interesting and historic Dorset landscape. He disguised Dorchester as Wessex in his novels and poetry.
- Beginning at the age of 58, Hardy published many volumes of poetry-over 900 poems in all.
- His poetry is straight to the point [sparse and unadorned]. Though some consider his poetry to be unromantic, Hardy was imaginative and explored interesting feelings, just like the Romantic poets did.
- Hardy's most common theme is humanity's struggle against fate. Hardy is pessimistic in the way he portrays humanity's futile struggle against cosmic forces. His work has a tragic vision; a sense that human life has to be endured. Hardy's vision is said to be stoical as it involves an acceptance of fate.
- Hardy had a vision of a post religious society. He grew up in an era of narrow religious values and certainties. These ideas were beginning to disappear during his mature years as a poet. Instead of the traditional ways of understanding, Hardy realised that science had reshaped humanity's vision of itself.
- Hardy favoured the lyric and ballad forms of poetry.

- Hardy's poetry explores the themes of rural life and nature, love and loss, cosmic indifference, the ravages of time, the inevitability of death and the inhuman ironies of war.
- Hardy's poetry is characterised by fatalistic pessimism, earthy realism, and abstract philosophising. Hardy's poetry contains great moral conviction.
- Hardy was fascinated by transience, change, mortality, time, human vanity, war, power, nature, human cruelty and the past.
- Hardy's tone is typically ironic. He sees the unexpected twists and surprises that life throws at people.
- His work provides keen psychological insights. Hardy uses original images that appeal to the reader's intelligence
- Hardy's tone is often bleak and communicates a sense of loss. He is also nostalgic, idealising and longing for the past. Yet he can sometimes view a memory in an ironic or realistic way.
- A lot of Hardy's poetry is relatively simple and yet skilful. Yet, some of his poetic writing can be difficult due to old-fashioned words and phrases
- Some of his poems are regarded as deliberately obscure. Hardy claimed that he often tried to hide his art or craft behind awkwardness. The poems on the course are relatively straight-forward.
- Hardy's poems tend to be descriptive, lyrical, and regular in form. He does not tend to experiment with form.

## Themes of his Poems

### Remembering the Dead

Both "Afterwards" and "The Voice" focus on the disjunction between who a person is when they are alive, and how they are remembered after their death. In "Afterwards," the speaker speculates about the aftermath of his own death. His assumption that he will be remembered as a man who noticed things is tempered by the poem's repeated use of questions, which emphasizes that ultimately knowledge about how we will be remembered is utterly inaccessible to us. Conversely, "The Voice" is written from the perspective of a man whose wife has just died. Here, we see that he does indeed remember her, not as she was when she died, but as she was when she was young, and he was still in love with her. In this case, even as he imagines that he hears her voice, she exists, in memory, entirely on the terms of her husband and his desires.

### Nature and Romanticism

"Afterwards," "The Voice," and "The Darkling Thrush" are all set in the countryside. In each poem, Hardy lingers over imagery of the natural world, often employing metaphor, simile, and alliteration in order to provide emphasis and suggest the

connections between various details of the natural world, and between the natural world and human beings. Despite this clear reverence for the natural world, Hardy also has a tendency to depict it as bleak and barren. In contrast to the work of Romantic poets like Percy Shelley, who argued for the natural world as the sublime alternative to the fleeting meaninglessness of human accomplishment and civilization, Hardy depicts the natural world as implicated in the failures of humanity. Both "The Darkling Thrush" and "The Voice" draw parallels between a death—either of a century or a loved one—and the cold hopelessness of winter. Thus, rather than a source of renewal, the natural world becomes an echo of the author's own pessimism.

### Loss of the Past

"The Darkling Thrush" presents the end of the nineteenth century as a kind of death, with the beginning of the twentieth century as its reluctant funeral. Rather than writing about history in terms of progress, Hardy orients his poetry towards the past. His pervasive nostalgia depicts a sense that the past was better than the present, and the poem is thus driven by a sense both of mourning, and of unfulfilled desire. This same sensibility appears in more personal form in "The Voice," which similarly seems oriented towards an intangible past that cannot be regained by the author. In the case of "The Darkling Thrush," Hardy evokes not just personal mourning, but a deeply pessimistic view of human and literary history. The poem depicts the present as a land made barren, arguing that the passage of time can no longer bring about regeneration. Hardy even implicates poetry in this history, suggesting that the literary tradition in which he himself writes has also reached its end.

### The Role of Poetry

"Afterwards," "The Voice," and "The Darkling Thrush" all use many poetic devices to talk about a diverse set of themes, and to depict a variety of images. At the same time, they also turn back in on themselves in order to discuss poetry itself. "Afterwards" glorifies the act of noticing, pointing both to the mechanisms of poetry and to the building blocks of the novel, Hardy's other major literary pursuit. In this more optimistic poem, poetry becomes a way to be remembered, and a way to engage meaningfully with the world in order to form connections between oneself and the vast universe. In contrast, "The Darkling Thrush" presents a more pessimistic view, suggesting that the beginning of the modern era has broken a poetic tradition drawing back all the way to an ancient past. Yet, at the same time, the voice of the thrush seems to symbolize a new poetry which might bring a frail but present hope. "The Voice" similarly draws a connection between the voice of the speaker's dead lover which the poem depicts, and the voice of the poem itself. There, the instability of the first-personal voice, and the inconsistency of the speaker's tone and diction, suggests a desire for a more conversational mode of poetry which the woman's death has made impossible.

### Finding Meaning Without God

Hardy's particular atheism was rooted in what he saw as the many cruelties of human life, and in the belief that no just God could allow the suffering which exists on earth.

It was hence a deeply pessimistic atheism, and throughout his life, Hardy struggled to find meaning in the world as he perceived it. "The Darkling Thrush" presents a nuanced approach to this question. On the one hand, it depicts a world which is deteriorating, a history which gradually worsens along with the land. Without the universal resurrection promised by Christianity, the nineteenth century remains a corpse, the land remains barren, and there is little hope for a more meaningful future. Yet, at the same time, Hardy draws a distinction between "terrestrial things" and a hope which might come from beyond the earth. It isn't clear that this hope can have a material impact on the bleakness of the speaker's world, but it does suggest that that bleakness is not all that exists.

## Glossary

**beruffled**

Disorderly, scruffy

**bine-stems**

The stem of a flexible climbing plant

**coppice**

An area of woodland tended to by farmers in order to stimulate growth and provide firewood

**evensong**

Music for evening church service

**gaunt**

Appearing lean and exhausted, especially as the result of suffering

**germ**

A small amount of a living substance capable of developing into a living organism, such as a seed

**faltering**

Losing momentum or strength

**filmed**

To be or appear to be covered with a thin layer of something

**illimited**

Free from limitation or restraint

**listlessness**

Having or showing little to no interest in anything

**mead**

In "Afterwards," mead is used to mean something like meadow or heath.

**nigh**

Near or almost

**norward**

A place in the north

**outleant**

To lean further

**outrollings**

In "Afterwards," the state of billowing as a wind

**postern**

A back door or gate

**quittance**

Discharge from an obligation

**spectre**

A ghost

**tremulous**

To be affected with involuntary shaking

**wistlessness**

The state of being not knowing, ignorant, or unwitting

## Hardy's Poems: Study Guide

Described by the acclaimed twentieth-century poet and literary critic W.H. Auden as being "modern without being too modern," Thomas Hardy is one of the most influential and important writers in English literary history. Today, nearly a century since his death, he is still widely read in schools and by fans throughout the world. His literary oeuvre is punctuated by recurrent themes and, perhaps above all, by a constant return to the English countryside; after all, he set all his novels in south and southwest England, in a region he termed 'Wessex.'

His poetry is particularly striking. Scholars believe that between 1898 and 1928, Hardy published some 900 poems. The number of poems he wrote is believed to be much higher. Debate has also raged amongst literary critics over the extent to which we can



place Hardy in his poetry, as either a character alluded to or the narrator itself. Either way, we can learn much from his poetry not only about how he reacted to significant events in his own life, including the death of his first wife, but also about how he reacted to significant world events, including the Second Boer War and the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912.

Hardy is a complex figure, his life marked both by intense personal experiences and by the turbulent era in which he lived. Fin-de-siecle Victorian society was a melting pot of beliefs and peoples. While taboo issues such as homosexuality and the perceived threat of miscegenation were beginning to be explored in the literature of Oscar Wilde and Bram Stoker (*The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Dracula*, respectively), scientific beliefs, notably Darwinism, had begun to challenge the authority of the Church. Life on the ground was also changing rapidly, as pointed to in Hardy's 1924 poem "Nobody Comes," where he writes of "A car...with lamps full-glare" passing him by. Industrialization and the emergence of new technologies such as the car began to alter what had been a very rural way of life before; people started to relocate to the cities in search of paid employment, thus leaving the previously active countryside quiet. Poems like "The Darkling Thrush" attempt to reckon with these rapid changes in lifestyle, and to mourn a past which seems utterly gone in the rush of new technologies. This sense of the horror at a broken present is part of why Hardy is often categorized as a modernist, despite his Victorian roots.

So, in reading Hardy's poetry, we must consider its historical context and the important contemporary events that the Victorian reader would most certainly have been aware of. Aside from these larger developments which impacted the lives of a considerable number of people in the 1890s, we must also consider Hardy's own background, and the events he experienced in his life that we can trace in his literary output. The two major romantic relationships of his life crop up frequently in his work; his first marriage of 38 years to wife Emma Gifford (1874-1912) which ended when she died, and his second marriage of 14 years to Florence Dugdale, which ended upon his death in 1928. After Emma's death in 1912, Hardy was consumed by grief and dedicated the remaining years of his life to writing poetry about his lost wife and their complex and troubled relationship, from touching poems including "The Going," and "Your Last Drive" to poems like "The Voice," which is more pessimistic and haunting. Indeed, Hardy named a group of nearly thirty poems "Poems of 1912-13," a work which testifies to the importance of the immediate period after Emma's death for his literary career. Unsurprisingly, Florence, who moved in with the poet the year after Emma's death, felt somewhat isolated and ignored in her marriage, though there was a great deal of love and affection between the married couple, who remained together until Hardy's death in 1928.

It would be wrong, however, to describe his poetry as being concerned only with personal issues. In 'Drummer Hodge', he tackles head-on what he sees as a waste of young lives and resources, namely war. "The Darkling Thrush" concerns both an individual speaker and a broader historical dynamic in which all living people are involved. In "The Convergence of the Twain," a poem about the sinking of the *Titanic*, Hardy criticizes what he perceives as mankind's attempts to outdo the power of the natural world with technological innovation; as Hardy puts it, "the smart ship" is no match for "the Shape of Ice," leading to her sinking and the deaths of hundreds onboard.

Hardy's musings on the natural world don't focus solely on its power, but also its harsh and uncaring character. In "The Darkling Thrush," the bleak and desolate setting parallels the speaker's mournful perception of the end of the nineteenth century. Likewise, in "The Voice," the natural world appears uncanny and haunting, in line with the overall mood of the poem.

In spite of the verse form, rhythm or rhyme scheme used, Hardy returns to some key themes in his poetic output: love, how it can be extinguished and how the loss of a loved one impacts an individual; the incessant passing of time and our inability to prevent it; and the importance of place and setting in our lives. Whether he be read as a pensive and regretful widower, an anti-war campaigner, or a provincial Luddite, Thomas Hardy, as a poet, continues to make us think and that, above all else, is arguably why he is still so popular almost a century since he last put pen to paper.



# Hardy's Short Stories

<https://www.hardysociety.org/life/short-stories/>

“A story must be exceptional enough to justify the telling.

We tale-tellers are all ancient Mariners, and none of us is warranted in stopping Wedding Guests (in other words, the hurrying public) unless he has something more unusual to relate than the ordinary experience of every average man & woman.”

<< *Thomas Hardy*

Hardy was prolific not only as a Novelist and as a Poet but also as a writer of Short Stories. He began publishing Short Stories in periodicals in 1874 and continued to do so for over thirty years in total over fifty Short Stories, ranging from the brief narratives of his *A Few Crusted Characters* group stories told by the occupants of a carrier's van as they were driven from Casterbridge to Weatherbury, to the long novella *The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid*.

He published the main body of his Short Stories in three volumes *Wessex Tales* (1888), *A Group of Noble Dames* (1891) and *Lifes Little Ironies* (1894), collecting the remaining stories under the title *A Changed Man and Other Tales* in 1913. Unlike anything else Hardy wrote *A Group of Noble Dames* is a story cycle in which the speakers, forced indoors by inclement weather, tell tales of the eighteenth-century Dorset aristocracy.

A close kinship exists between Hardys Short Stories, his Novels and his narrative poems the plot of many of his short stories would readily expand to fill a complete novel; the stories are thus a condensed but more intense version of the novels and as such give a fascinating précis of Hardy's outlook upon and understanding of the world - in which psychological factors are pre-eminent.

## Hardy's Short Stories

Thomas Hardy penned nearly fifty short stories, but in spite of this impressive number, his contributions to the genre have been relatively understudied. Bringing together an international group of scholars, this is the first edited collection devoted solely to Hardy's works of short fiction. The contributors take up topics related to their publication in periodicals, gender and community relationships, and narrative techniques. Taken together, the essays show that Hardy's short stories are important, not only

for what they tell us about Hardy as a writer who straddles the divide between the traditionalist and the modernist, but also for how they reflect and inform the period in which he wrote.

### Here is a LIST of Short Stories:

(with date of first publication)

- "How I Built Myself a House" (1865)
- "Destiny and a Blue Cloak" (1874)
- "The Thieves Who Couldn't Stop Sneezing" (1877)
- "The Duchess of Hamptonshire" (1878) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "The Distracted Preacher" (1879) (collected in *Wessex Tales*)
- "Fellow-Townsmen" (1880) (collected in *Wessex Tales*)
- "The Honourable Laura" (1881) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "What the Shepherd Saw" (1881) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "A Tradition of Eighteen Hundred and Four" (1882) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The Three Strangers" (1883) (collected in *Wessex Tales*)
- "The Romantic Adventures of a Milkmaid" (1883) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "Interlopers at the Knap" (1884) (collected in *Wessex Tales*)
- "A Mere Interlude" (1885) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork" (1885) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "Alicia's Diary" (1887) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "The Waiting Supper" (1887–88) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "The Withered Arm" (1888) (collected in *Wessex Tales*)
- "A Tragedy of Two Ambitions" (1888) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The First Countess of Wessex" (1889) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "Anna, Lady Baxby" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "The Lady Icenway" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "Lady Mottisfont" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "The Lady Penelope" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "The Marchioness of Stonehenge" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "Squire Petrick's Lady" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "Barbara of the House of Grebe" (1890) (collected in *A Group of Noble Dames*)
- "The Melancholy Hussar of The German Legion" (1890) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "Absent-Mindedness in a Parish Choir" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The Winters and the Palmleys" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "For Conscience' Sake" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "Incident in the Life of Mr. George Crookhill" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The Doctor's Legend" (1891)
- "Andrey Satchel and the Parson and Clerk" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The History of the Hardcomes" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "Netty Sargent's Copyhold" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "On the Western Circuit" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "A Few Crusted Characters: Introduction" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The Superstitious Man's Story" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "Tony Kytes, the Arch-Deceiver" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)



- "To Please His Wife" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "The Son's Veto" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "Old Andrey's Experience as a Musician" (1891) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "Our Exploits At West Poley" (1892–93)
- "Master John Horseleigh, Knight" (1893) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "The Fiddler of the Reels" (1893) (collected in *Life's Little Ironies*)
- "An Imaginative Woman" (1894) (collected in *Wessex Tales*, 1896 edition)
- "The Spectre of the Real" (1894)
- "A Committee-Man of 'The Terror'" (1896) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "The Duke's Reappearance" (1896) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "The Grave by the Handpost" (1897) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "A Changed Man" (1900) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "Enter a Dragoon" (1900) (collected in *A Changed Man and Other Stories*)
- "Blue Jimmy: The Horse Stealer" (1911)
- "Old Mrs. Chundle" (1929)
- "The Unconquerable" (1992)

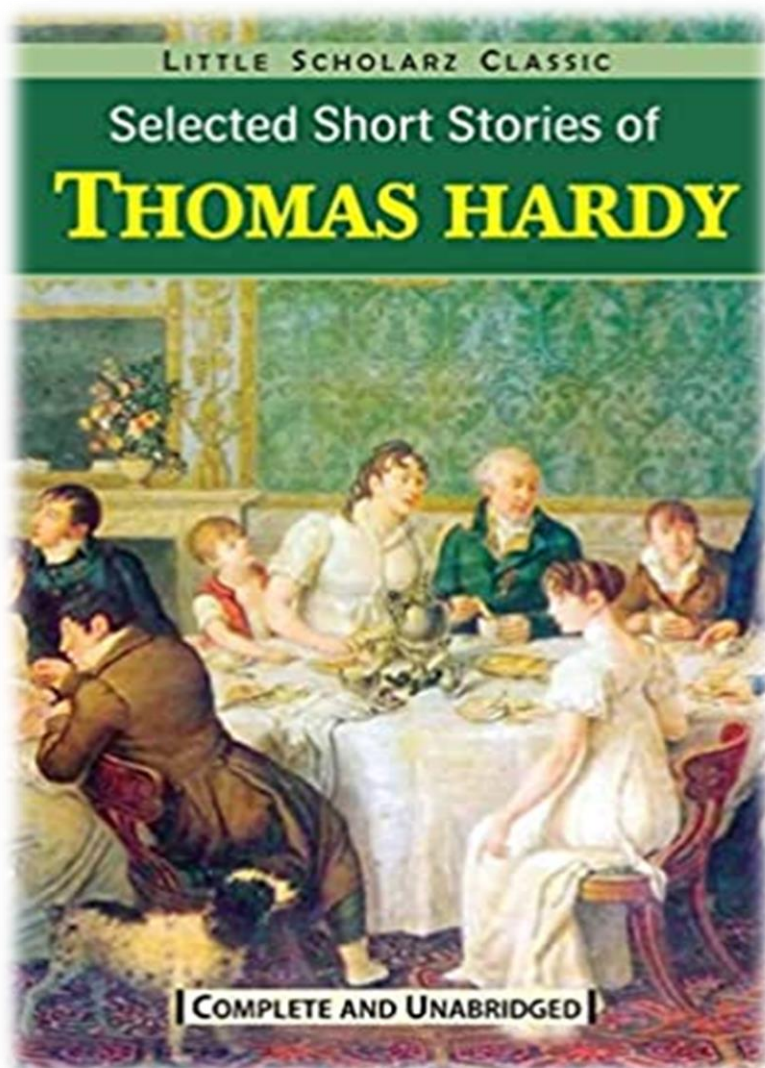
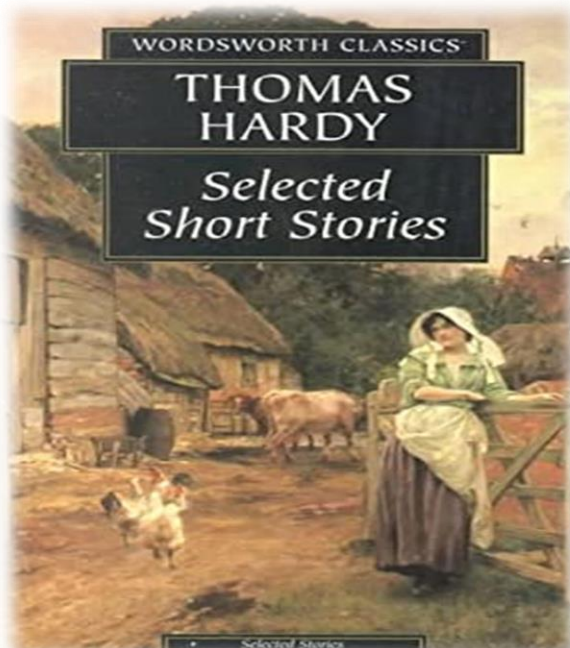
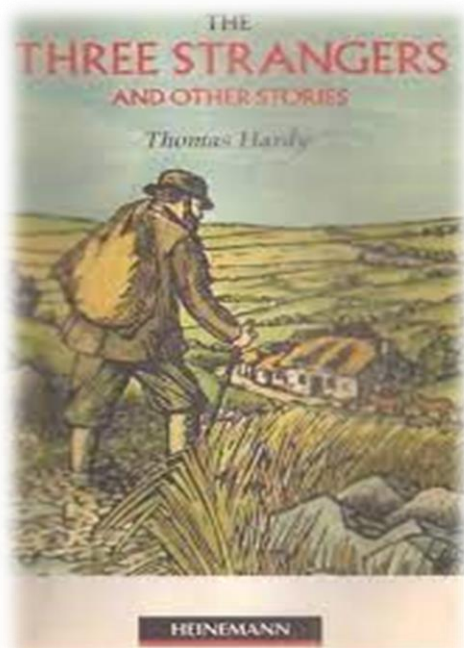
## Brief Profile of his Short Stories

- Thomas Hardy wrote a total of fifty-three short stories, collecting thirty-seven in four volumes: *Wessex Tales* (six short stories written between 1879 and 1888), *A Group of Noble Dames* (ten short stories written between 1878 and 1890), *Life's Little Ironies* (nine short stories written between 1882 and 1893), and *A Changed Man* (twelve short stories written between 1881 and 1900). Writing primarily for an appreciation of narrative, Hardy wrote simply because he loved to tell short stories. Hardy compares storytelling to Samuel Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner." "A story must be exceptional enough to justify its telling. We tale-tellers are all Ancient Mariners, and none of us is warranted in stopping Wedding Guests (in other words, the hurrying public) unless he has something more unusual to relate than the ordinary experience of every average man and woman" (Millgate 268). Hardy explains the actual substance of the story is what creates a powerful narrative.
- In ***Wessex Tales***, published in 1888, Hardy writes using the pastoral voice. Many of these tales are set before Hardy's birth (1840). Separating the time period of his readers from his character's lives, Hardy creates a fictional world. The stories collected in *Wessex Tales* portray the hierarchy of shepherds and artisans, unlike the aristocratic literature of the Victorian era. To create these stories, Hardy studied Dorset's old newspapers, parish records, and spoke with older people of the town. Kristin Brady links Hardy's studying of people to the creation of his narrative voice: "The stories are all firmly grounded in Dorset life and folklore during the mid-nineteenth century and are drawn together by a unique narrative perspective, the pastoral voice"(2). Revealing the humorous and affectionate observations of rustic life, the



stories provide the foundation for Hardy's Wessex, which is further defined in his novels.

- His next volume ***A Group of Noble Dames*** collected in 1891, reflect romantic or supernatural themes often reminiscent of folk tales. The information Hardy gathers for these works is primarily found in Hutchin's history of Dorset. An Antiquarian Club member, Hardy uses information collected in meetings to create different fictional stories from seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Dorset. Hardy describes *A Group of Noble Dames* as "raising images from genealogies"(Brady 52). The stories fill in the motives and passions of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century people whom Hardy studies in the Antiquarian Club and Hutchin's history. By studying, Hardy begins to create characters who reflect inherent behavior of people living in the eighteenth century. In both *A Group of Noble Dames* and his next volume *Life's Little Ironies*, Hardy explores the reactions of people, particularly women, placed in extreme social situations.
- ***Life's Little Ironies***, collected in 1894, focuses on the nature of men and women courting and marrying. Unlike the pastoral voice in *Wessex Tales*, the rhetorical voice in *Life's Little Ironies* challenges the thinking of Hardy's readers. In this collection Hardy exposes the inconsistencies of the Victorian society in order to influence contemporary social, and cultural ideas. According to Brady, Hardy "seems to have felt most strongly a frustration at the restrictive power of Victorian moral conventions over contemporary life and literary expression"(95). *Life's Little Ironies* is an honest account of the relationships occurring during this time period. Rather than write sentimentally about relationships, Hardy provides an accurate portrayal of the difficulties between men and women. *Life's Little Ironies* is Hardy's attempt to break free from the Victorian attitudes, allowing the reader to make his or her own judgments
- Compiled in 1913, his fourth and final volume, ***A Changed Man*** is filled with short stories having no common theme. The stories published in *A Changed Man* lack revisions and possess no unity. Hardy chose to publish the works to secure the copyright and provide a location for a few polished stories. Although only a few stories show evidence of revision, the volume illustrates the development of Hardy's ideas.
- The short stories of Thomas Hardy display, through their history and themes, the social and cultural attitudes of people in Dorset. Each volume, except *A Changed Man*, contains a different narrative voice which, like that of any good story teller, forces the reader to hear the pastoral, ironic, or rhetorical theme. By displaying his narrative voice, Hardy has pushed his readers toward fantasy, romanticism, and reality.



# Hardy's Novels

## An Introduction

Hardy's first novel, *The Poor Man and the Lady*, finished by 1867, failed to find a publisher. He then showed it to his mentor and friend, the Victorian poet and novelist George Meredith, who felt that *The Poor Man and the Lady* would be too politically controversial and might damage Hardy's ability to publish in the future. So Hardy followed his advice and he did not try further to publish it. He subsequently destroyed the manuscript, but used some of the ideas in his later work. In his recollections in *Life and Work*, Hardy described the book as "socialistic, not to say revolutionary; yet not argumentatively so."

After he abandoned his first novel, Hardy wrote two new ones that he hoped would have more commercial appeal, *Desperate Remedies* (1871) and *Under the Greenwood Tree* (1872), both of which were published anonymously; it was while working on the latter that he met Emma Gifford, who would become his wife. In 1873 *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, a novel drawing on Hardy's courtship of Emma, was published under his own name. A plot device popularised by Charles Dickens, the term "cliffhanger" is considered to have originated with the serialised version of *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (published in *Tinsley's Magazine* between September 1872 and July 1873) in which Henry Knight, one of the protagonists, is left literally hanging off a cliff. Elements of Hardy's fiction reflect the influence of the commercially successful sensation fiction of the 1860s, particularly the legal complications in novels such as *Desperate Remedies* (1871), *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874) and *Two on a Tower* (1882).

In *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Hardy first introduced the idea of calling the region in the west of England, where his novels are set, Wessex. Wessex had been the name of an early Saxon kingdom, in approximately the same part of England. *Far from the Madding Crowd* was successful enough for Hardy to give up architectural work and pursue a literary career. Over the next 25 years, Hardy produced 10 more novels.

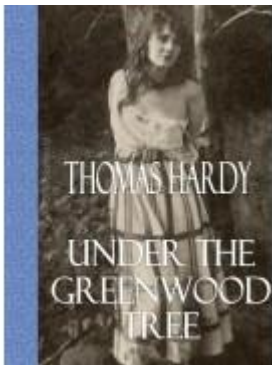
Subsequently, Hardy moved from London to Yeovil, and then to Sturminster Newton, where he wrote *The Return of the Native* (1878). In 1880, Hardy published his only historical novel, *The Trumpet-Major*. A further move to Wimborne saw Hardy write *Two on a Tower*, published in 1882, a romance story set in the world of astronomy. Then in 1885, they moved for the last time, to Max Gate, a house outside Dorchester designed by Hardy and built by his brother. There he wrote *The*



*Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *The Woodlanders* (1887), and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), the last of which attracted criticism for its sympathetic portrayal of a "fallen woman", and initially it was refused publication. Its subtitle, *A Pure Woman: Faithfully Presented*, was intended to raise the eyebrows of the Victorian middle classes.

*Jude the Obscure*, published in 1895, met with an even stronger negative response from the Victorian public because of its controversial treatment of sex, religion and marriage. Its apparent attack on the institution of marriage caused strain on Hardy's already difficult marriage because Emma Hardy was concerned that *Jude the Obscure* would be read as autobiographical. Some booksellers sold the novel in brown paper bags, and Walsham How, the Bishop of Wakefield, is reputed to have burnt his copy. In his postscript of 1912, Hardy humorously referred to this incident as part of the career of the book: "After these [hostile] verdicts from the press its next misfortune was to be burnt by a bishop – probably in his despair at not being able to burn me". Despite this, Hardy had become a celebrity by the 1900s, but some argue that he gave up writing novels because of the criticism of both *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and *Jude the Obscure*. *The Well-Beloved*, first serialised in 1892, was published in 1897.

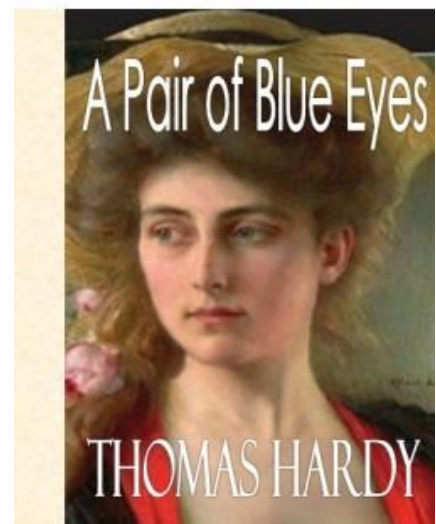
### Profile of some Novels

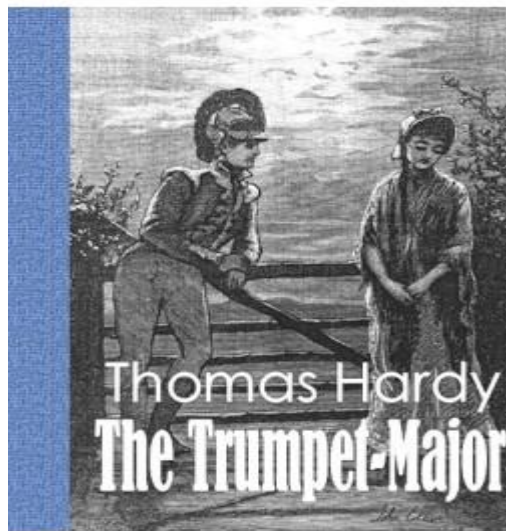


Thomas Hardy's pastoral novel *Under The Greenwood Tree* explores the triangle romance between School mistress Fancy Day, Church musician Dick Dewy and the vicar Maybold. While Fancy Day's beauty made Dick to be longing for her, Maybold loved her skills of playing modern organ music. Initially Fancy falls in love with Dick and gets engaged secretly. As the novel progress, Fancy accepts to marry Maybold, however the secret engagement is leaked. Maybold, a gentleman conveys her to inform Dick about their marriage. But she keeps the secret for

ever against her partner's wish.

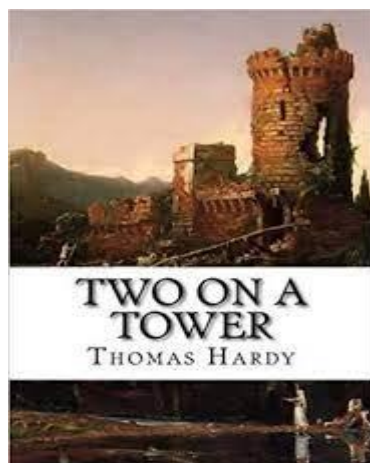
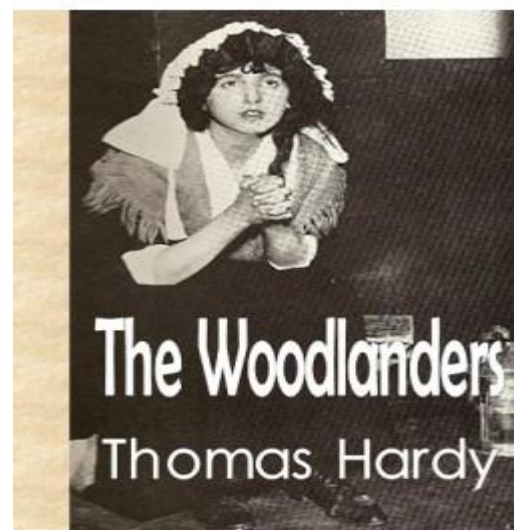
Thomas Hardy's another tragic novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes*, explores the life of Elfride Swancourt, who was unfortunate to marry an elderly man, in spite of being loved by Stephen Smith and Henry Knight in her early years. Henry Knight, a relative of Elfride's step mother wish to marry her. However knowing her early relationship with Stephen Smith, he cancels the engagement. Caught between her suitors, desperate Elfride marry Lord Luxellian. She never thought both her early suitors are travelling to meet her without knowing her marriage status.





The Trumpet-Major is a novel written by Thomas Hardy during Napoleonic wars and ironically with preliminary note by the author. Anne Garland's suitors the brothers John Loveday, serving British regiment and Bob Loveday, a sailor and Festus Derriman, a coward. While John fights in Peninsular War, Bob serving at Trafalgar. Though this novel does not explicitly narrates a tragic event, author leave the thoughts of readers about the end.

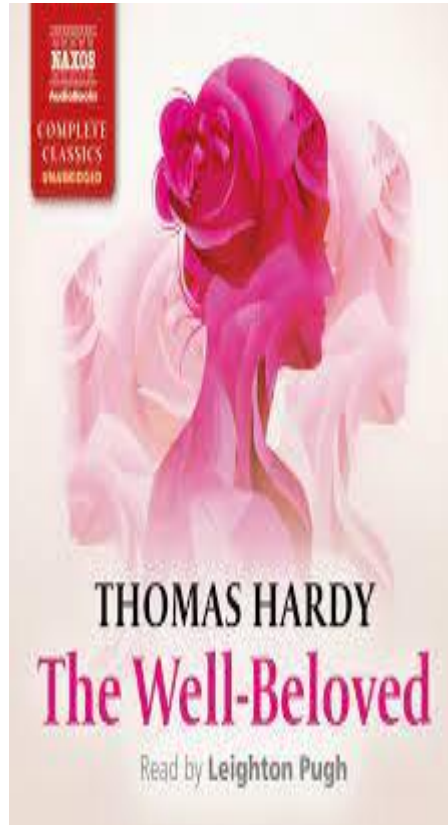
The Woodlanders is a tragic novel explores the adultery in the then England while divorce was not legalized. Grace Melbury's childhood love and romance with Giles Winterborne takes a break as her father felt Giles' financial status would ruin her life. Edgar Fitzpiers, a doctor persuades Grace's father to get her married. As their life progress, Grace comes to know about his affairs with many elderly women. While he was caught red-handed was brutally assaulted by Grace's father and it turns him towards adultery.



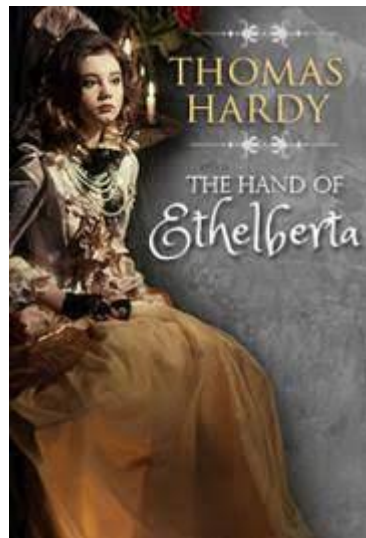
Two On A Tower is a tale of [star-crossed](#) love in which Hardy sets the emotional lives of his two lovers against the background of the stellar universe. The unhappily married Lady Constantine breaks all the rules of social decorum when she falls in love with Swithin St. Cleeve, an astronomer who is ten years her junior. Her husband's death leaves the lovers free to marry, but the discovery of a legacy forces them apart. This is Hardy's most complete treatment of the theme of love across the class and age divide and the fullest expression of his fascination with science and astronomy.



Powerful symbolism marks this romantic fantasy that Hardy has grounded firmly in reality with a characteristically authentic rendering of location, the Isle of Slingers, or Portland as we know it. relationship between creativity makes this novel landmark in the persistent aesthetics and gender. A from the local wayfarers road which leads through definable as the Street of into that Gibraltar of peninsula once an island, that stretches out like the English Channel. It is mainland by a long thin by rages of the se, ' and in Europe. The pedestrian like-a young man from the Continent. Nobody that his urbanism sat upon He was just recollecting reproach that a whole months had flown since he

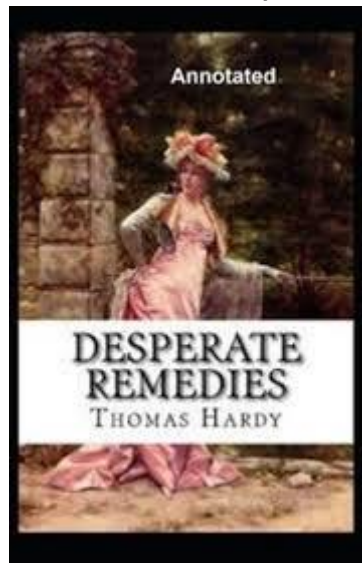


Overt exploration of the erotic fascination and a nineteenth-century debate about art, person who differed was climbing the steep the sea-skirted townlet Wells, and forms a pass Wessex, the singular and still called such, head of a bird into the connected with the neck of pebbles 'cast up unparalleled in its kind was what he looked London and the cities of could see at present him only as a garment. with something of self-three years and eight paid his last visit to his



*The Hand of Ethelberta: A Comedy in Chapters* is a novel by Thomas Hardy, published in 1876. It was written, in serial form, for *The Cornhill Magazine*, which was edited by Leslie Stephen, a friend and mentor of Hardy's. Unlike the majority of Hardy's fiction, the novel is a comedy, with both humour and a happy ending for the major characters and no suicides or tragic deaths. The late nineteenth century novelist George Gissing, who knew Hardy, considered it "surely old Hardy's poorest book".

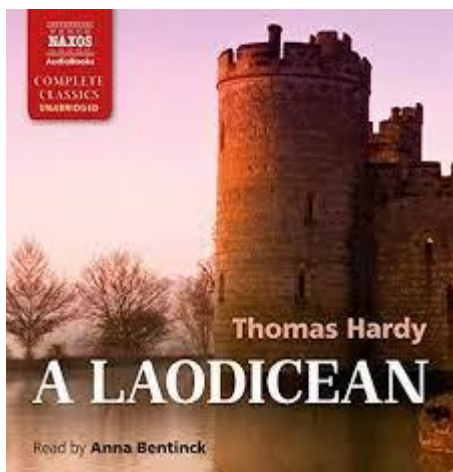
In *Desperate Remedies* a young woman, Cytherea Graye, is forced by poverty to accept a post as lady's maid to the eccentric Miss Aldclyffe, the woman whom her father had loved but had been unable to marry. Cytherea loves a young architect, Edward Adclyffe's machinations, the already engaged to a woman the urgent need to support a accept the hand of Aeneas illegitimate son, whose first perished in a fire; however, immediately nullified when it had left the inn before it apparently, returns to live brother, the local rector, and the woman claiming to be It emerges that Manston



Manston, Miss Aldclyffe's wife is believed to have their marriage is almost emerges that his first wife caught fire. Manston's wife, with him, but Cytherea, her Edward come to suspect that Mrs. Manston is an impostor. killed his wife in an argument

after she left the inn, and had brought in the impostor to prevent his being prosecuted for murder, as the argument had been heard (but not seen) by a poacher, who suspected Manston of murder and had planned to go to the police if his wife did not turn up alive. In the novel's climax, Manston attempts to kidnap Cytherea and flee, but is stopped by Edward; he later commits suicide in his cell, and Cytherea and Edward marry.

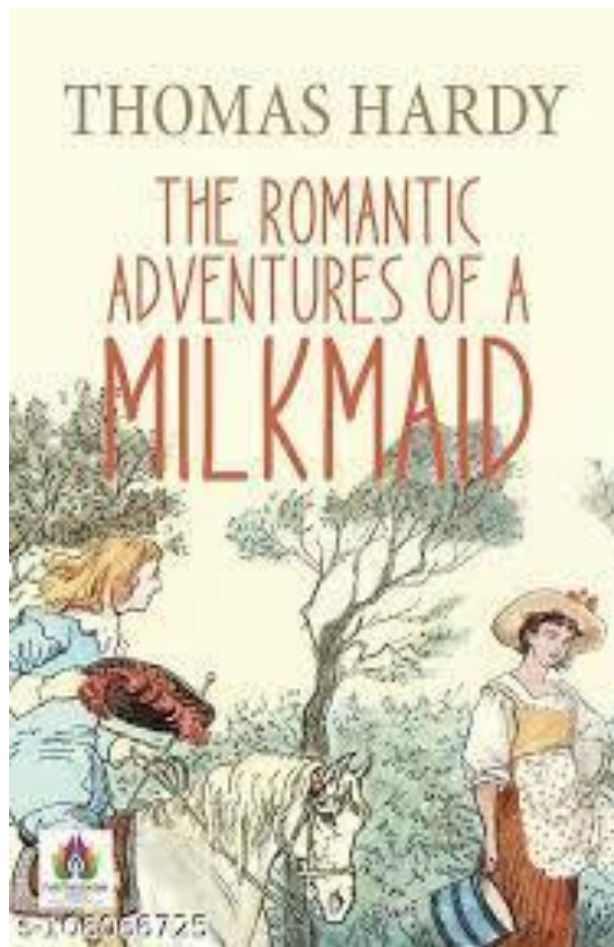
*A Laodicean* is regarded as the weakest of Hardy's novels (Evelyn Hardy 178),



although when first published it received relatively good reviews. In fact, it is not worse than, for example, *Desperate Remedies* or *The Hand of Ethelberta*, but it remains undeservedly one of Hardy's most neglected and least read novels, due to, it seems, a typical flaw of Hardy's style — poor credibility and numerous inconsistencies. The shortcomings of the novel can be explained not only by the fact that the author was seriously

incapacitated by his illness, but as Geoffrey Harvey has pointed out, Hardy tried to combine unsuccessfully “the medieval form of the morality play with modern social realism” (105). As a result, *A Laodicean*, which is basically a romance, contains a number of diverse themes, such as medievalism and modernity, the onset of Victorian modern technology (telegraph, photography, railway), gambling, forgery, female sexuality, ambiguous same-sex relationships, male voyeurism, mystery and chance. However, none of these themes is satisfactorily developed and, therefore, the novel lacks coherence and a consistent overall message.

In this much-anthologized story, Thomas Hardy combines realism and imagination to create a romance that illustrates the danger of allowing sexual desire to influence one's marriage choice. Set in the village of Silverthorn in Hardy's Lower Wessex, "The Romantic Milkmaid" focuses on a young Margery Tucker, a rustic milkmaid whose life is unsettled by the Baron von Xanten. Margery unwittingly prevents the baron's suicide when they first meet, and when she offers a reward in gratitude, she asks him to take her to experience his lime burning relationship with her fiancé, the local lime burner Jim Hayward. She has fallen in

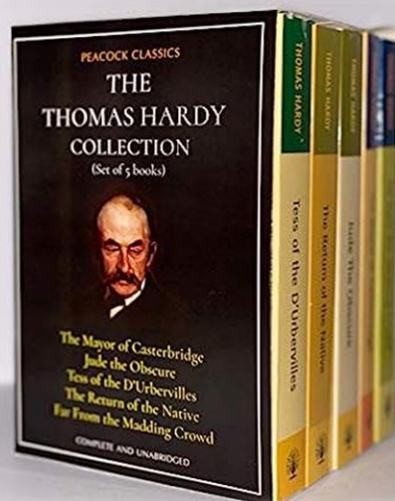


love with the luxury of the baron's world and desires the baron for herself. When she misses her own wedding to meet with the baron, the nobleman finally realizes the damage he has done. He helps Jim impress Margery with expensive furniture and other household items, but she still resists Jim's advances. Finally, the baron, apparently on his deathbed, arranges a surprise marriage ceremony for Margery, and she marries Jim on the condition that their bond is kept secret. They live apart for several months until Jim settles on two new schemes to attract Margery's attention. He joins the yeomanry regiment to impress her, and he courts a local widow, Mrs. Peach, to incite Margery's jealousy. The schemes succeed until the baron, now in better health, returns and whisks Margery away toward the coast where his yacht is moored. Von Xanten asks Margery to join him abroad, but when she refuses, he returns her to Silverthorn, where she finally reunites with Jim. Years later, Margery and Jim learn that the baron has killed himself, and Margery admits that she would have accompanied von Xanten had he pressed her to do so.



***The Poor Man and the Lady*** was the first novel written by Thomas Hardy. It was written in 1867 and never published. After the manuscript had been rejected by at least five publishers, Hardy gave up his attempts to sell the novel in its original form; however, he incorporated some of its scenes and themes into later works, notably in the poem "*The Poor Man and the Lady*" and in the novella *An Indiscretion in the Life of an Heiress* (1878).

The manuscript no longer exists; Hardy destroyed the last surviving fragment during his last years, after abandoning the idea of reconstructing the rest of the novel from memory.



# Webliographies

01]

<https://scholarship.rice.edu/bitstream/handle/1911/89440/RICE0470.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

A THESIS [on Thomas Hardy's Short Stories] submitted to the Faculty Requirements for the Degree of in Partial Fulfilment of the Master of Arts in The Rice University, Houston, Texas, in 1960.

02]

<https://www.hardysociety.org/>

The Thomas Hardy Society was founded in 1968 to promote understanding and appreciation of the life and works of the novelist and poet Thomas Hardy (1840-1928). One of the largest literary societies in the world, the Thomas Hardy Society is a community of general readers and enthusiasts as well as students and academics.

03]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Hardy%27s\\_Wessex](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Hardy%27s_Wessex)

Thomas Hardy's Wessex is the fictional literary landscape created by the English author Thomas Hardy as the setting for his major novels,[1] located in the south and southwest of England.[2] Hardy named the area "Wessex" after the medieval Anglo-Saxon kingdom that existed in this part of that country prior to the unification of England by Æthelstan. Although the places that appear in his novels actually exist, in many cases he gave the place a fictional name. Here, a reader can find and know the brief of details about "Wessex".

04]

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/thomas-hardy>

The Poetry Foundation recognizes the power of words to transform lives. It works to amplify poetry and celebrate poets by fostering spaces for all to create, experience, and share poetry. It provides a separate and special page on Thomas Hardy with the links to his poetry.

05]

<https://www.thriftbooks.com/a/thomas-hardy/203167/>

Provides the links to Thomas Hardy's works and also, links to other similar authors to Thomas Hardy.

06]

<https://poets.org/poet/thomas-hardy>

Contains links to read all the poems of Thomas Hardy. Also, provides to links to 3000 contemporary and classic poets.

07]

<https://www.hardysociety.org/life/short-stories/>

This cite offers the websites contains the full text of all of Hardys four books of Short Stories, with



the tales of A Few Crusted Characters presented as a single continuous narrative. An additional fifth folder contains Hardy's Uncollected and Collaborative Stories.

08]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Hardy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Hardy)

Provides a detailed biography of Thomas Hardy and all his novels, poems, short stories with their web links.

09]

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0362762/>

Offers brief biography of Thomas Hardy and also, web links to the films based on his novels.

10]

<https://www.darlynthomas.com/hardyshortstories.htm>

A special exclusive page covering the short stories of Thomas Hardy with their web links leading to the stories that could be read.

11]

<https://www.penguin.co.uk/articles/2019/05/best-thomas-hardy-books-and-novels>

Thomas Hardy is perhaps one of the most famous English writers of all time, as his books challenged the oppressive Victorian social conventions and as a result he faced much criticism. Here are five of his best books.

12]

<https://bookroo.com/quotes/far-from-the-madding-crowd>

Containing the best 20 quotations from Far from the Madding Crowd.

13]

<https://www.hardysociety.org/media/files/8707-THJ-Autumn2018.pdf>

Providing the complete volume of *The Thomas Hardy Journal*, Autumn 2018. Vol. XXXIV, containing 132 pages.

14]

<https://www.sparknotes.com/author/thomas-hardy/>

Provides a brief biography of Thomas Hardy, Study Guides to his five novels, some quotations, web links to his novels, poems, short stories

15]

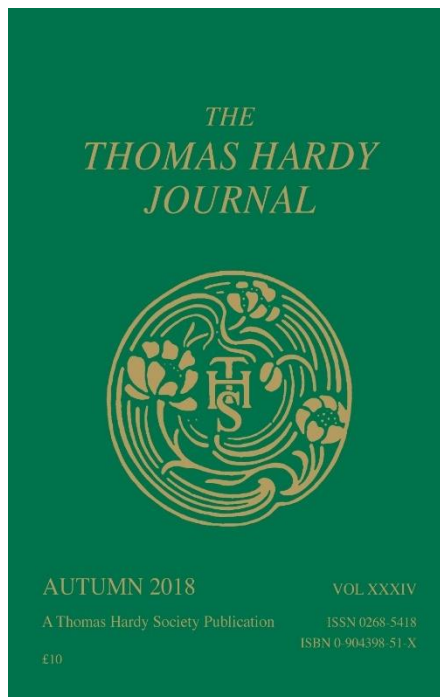
<https://www.englishliterature.info/2022/01/thomas-hardys-style-ofwriting.html>

Discusses the Thomas Hardy's style of writing and web links to leading some special aspects of themes and characters in his novels.

# The THOMAS HARDY Journal

The Thomas Hardy Society currently publishes three journals each year. Members of the Society receive print copies and/or [electronic access](#), depending on their [membership status](#). Journal contents are also published in digital format on ProQuest Literature Online.

While all academic peer-reviewed, the pride in serving as a exchange and 'general readers', range of disciplines stages of their established), students, the creative writers, anyone, in short, continuing literary of Thomas Hardy. journals typically diverse range of materials and approaches.



contributions are journals also take platform for dialogue between academics from a (from the earliest careers to the most researchers, heritage industry, educators, etc. - with a stake in the and cultural legacy As such, both welcome a broad,

The Hardy Society Journal appears twice annually, in spring and summer. Contributions might include - but are not limited to - reports on Society activities and other Hardy-related events, Society news, creative writing, reproducible illustrations, reflective pieces, book reviews, short research snapshots, and formal research articles. Research articles for the Hardy Society Journal will not typically

exceed 5,000 words, though longer articles may be considered for inclusion.

The Thomas Hardy Journal is published each autumn. Over the past three decades, it has become an important force in international Hardy scholarship. While it continues to update members on Society events, the emphasis falls on the scholarly study of Hardy's life, work, and contexts. Articles for the Thomas Hardy Journal do not typically exceed 8,000 words, but longer contributions will be considered occasionally.

Articles for both journals are sent for peer-review. Books reviews may be offered by contributors, but are usually invited by the editor. Contributions should be sent by email, in Word or Rich Text format, to the editor, Dr Emily Vause ([editor@hardysociety.org](mailto:editor@hardysociety.org)) . Email queries about the suitability of contributions are welcome.

If electronic submission is not possible, contributions may be sent by post to the Editor

**The Thomas Hardy Society,  
c/o Kingston Maurward College  
Dorchester,  
Dorset  
DT2 8PY**

All essays should be double-spaced. Please leave a margin of 2.54 cm/1 inch and use Times New Roman, font size 12. References should be given as endnotes. Authors of academic contributions should adhere to the [journal style guide](#).

A sample journal (Autumn 2018) is available to download here [Autumn 2018 journal](#)

.....

Please Visit: <https://www.hardysociety.org/journals/>

*THE  
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AUTUMN 2018

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*Members of the THS during the Fiddler of the Reels walk, led by Tony Fincham, attempting a reel to the tunes of Ruth and Colin Thompson*



*The Mellstock Band – photo courtesy of Howard J Payton*

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# THE THOMAS HARDY JOURNAL

Volume XXXIV

AUTUMN 2018

Editor: Karin Koehler

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Welcome to this autumn *Thomas Hardy Journal*, the first under the stewardship of our new editor, Dr Karin Koehler. We all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Phillip Mallett for completing a whole decade as editor of the *THJ* and *THSJ*, continuously producing journals of such high quality. I have no doubt that Karin will, in her own way, carry the journal forward to new heights.

**Office:** As many of you will be aware, the Dorset County Museum closed at the end of September in order to undergo a major extension and refurbishment. The plan is that it should reopen in the summer of 2020, just in time for our next Hardy Festival/Conference. In the interim, the Hardy Society Office has been relocated in the Dorchester Town Council Office, just around the corner at 19 North Square. Telephone number and postal address remain unchanged. Mike Nixon and Dee Tolfree have coped magnificently with the move but as their storage space remains largely at the museum, to which they will only have occasional access, they have asked me to point out that there are likely to be delays in the dispatch of orders for publications and merchandise.

**2018 Festival:** is reported on in detail elsewhere in this journal. In simple terms, all seemed to go well, with the start at Kingston Maurward being generally appreciated as was the moving of all the 'Call for Papers' sessions to the morning. Mike Nixon gives details of the Festival feedback in his report, the main criticism being continued audibility problems in the United Church. Your Council of Management endeavours every conference to correct this complaint but has singularly failed to do so. We therefore plan to hold the 2020 Festival/Conference at a new venue and I'm actively working on this now.

**Your Society Needs You!** : Predictably, although disappointingly, the response to my appeal in Summer *THSJ* and to our collective appeals at the AGM has been minimal. We still need a treasurer, and more help in the office. Immediately following the AGM, two ladies separately offered such help. Foolishly in post-Stamp melee, I didn't write down any details – merely recommending that they make contact with Mike Nixon, which sadly has not yet happened. Out there somewhere, there must be a THS treasurer – it is not an onerous job.

**North Dorchester:** although in its terminal throes, West Dorset District Council (to be replaced by a new Unitary Authority in 2019) is currently revising the Local Plan to include provision for a new development of

at least 3,500 dwellings on the edge of the downland immediately north of Dorchester – the so-called ‘North Dorchester’ new town. Having in 2013 rejected the proposal to build at Conygar Hill (Came Down), on land immediately adjoining Max Gate and Barnes’ Rectory, it beggars belief that the same Council can now consider it appropriate to propose building a detached new town across the water meadows from the Roman northern boundary of Casterbridge. The view north across Dorchester has already been seriously scarred by that Disney-esque carbuncle on the landscape, known (incorrectly) as Poundbury. ‘North Dorchester’ would be a far, far more serious intrusion upon the landscape – ruining forever that unique town ‘as compact as a box of dominoes’, having ‘no suburbs in the ordinary sense’, where ‘Country and town met in a mathematical line’.

This proposed new development would link Stinsford and Charminster parishes in one hideous conurbation. Today the population of Stinsford Parish is no greater than it was in 1840, when Hardy was born there. We are therefore talking about the destruction of Hardy’s Mellstock – so vividly described in his poetry and early fiction, especially in *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Desperate Remedies*. Not only would the setting of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* be damaged irrevocably but this new town would destroy the heart of Hardy’s Wessex, impinging especially on the landscape of *Far from the Madding Crowd* and many of the short stories.

Needless to say, I have written in the strongest terms objecting to this proposal on behalf of the Thomas Hardy Society – as have the rest of the Council of Management and other local members. I have stressed the international significance of this landscape (hopefully to be included soon with a new National Park) – it is very helpful to the cause if members of the THS from around the world and from elsewhere in the UK can also write in expressing their concerns. With luck, many of you will have done so already in response to our autumn e-Newsletter or to information on our website/social media. Although the initial objection period is now over, you can keep updated by googling STAND (Save the Area North of Dorchester).

**THS website:** THS Council members Andrew Hewitt, Tracy Hayes and Mark North have been working continuously over the summer with Cirrus Web Design on the construction of our new website. Whilst retaining all that is best on the current website, the finished product will be a great improvement – significantly updated – and appropriate for taking the Society into the third decade of the twenty-first century.



**Forward Thinking:** Your Council of Management is busy at work on the programme for the next year or two: details of the 2019 programme will be included as a flyer in this journal. The intention is to make the year a celebration of the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *Satires of Circumstance*, as well as acknowledging the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Far from the Madding Crowd* with the April Study Day. We are planning a joint event in Dorchester with the Philip Larkin Society over the weekend of Larkin's birthday, 9–11 August 2019, which also include the WHOTT coach outing (Sue Clarke led two historic coaches for a well-attended exploration of Egdon Heath and the Frome Valley in August this year). In addition, we are planning a London walk with the help of Professor Mark Ford (*Thomas Hardy – Half a Londoner*). A special celebration is planned for early March 2020 in St Juliot to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hardy's initial visit to Cornwall. For those who like a longer walk, I'm working on a Sandbourne to Stonehenge walk in the footsteps of Tess and Angel Clare. The distance is around 50 miles and it would therefore involve two overnight stops; early expressions of interest would be helpful in deciding whether it is worthwhile investing the effort into planning this walk, which would probably take place in either April or August 2020.

**TONY FINCHAM**

## EDITOR'S NOTES

I attended my first Thomas Hardy Conference and Festival in 2012, when I had completed one year of my PhD research at St Andrews University – supervised by Phillip Mallett, the previous editor of this journal. I hardly expected six years ago that by the time I would attend my fourth Conference and Festival, the twenty-third in the history of the Thomas Hardy Society, I would do so as the new editor. It is one of many pleasant surprises I have experienced since joining the THS, to which I owe many professional opportunities as well as, far more importantly, personal connections that extend beyond, but are deeply rooted in, a shared appreciation of Hardy's work.

I have accepted a formidable task in taking over the editorship from Phillip, who, for the past decade, invested vast amounts of time, attention, and energy into the project of making, to paraphrase Matthew Arnold very loosely, some of 'the best of what has been thought and said about Hardy', accessible to readers across the world. Without any shadow of a doubt he has, through this work, been absolutely vital in promoting the THS as well as knowledge of, and interest in, the work of Thomas Hardy. These are big shoes to fill, and my delight at becoming editor is, at the best of times, mixed with trepidation. Still, I did not hesitate for long when Phillip asked me whether I would consider the job, and, in the short months since I've begun, I have tremendously enjoyed the task.

I build on strong foundations and there is much that I wish to honour in the tradition of the society's journals. In particular, I am excited to promote dialogue and debate about Hardy, between 'general readers', academics from a range of disciplines (from the earliest stages of their careers to the most established), researchers, the heritage industry, creative writers, educators – anyone, in short, with a stake in the continuing literary and cultural legacy of Thomas Hardy. The journal is a place for celebrating the life and work of Thomas Hardy, and work about Hardy, but also to inspect and review it critically. The best service we can do Hardy, I think, is to read and re-read his words, to ask difficult questions about them, and to continually reflect on and re-evaluate their meaning.

The journal will continue to welcome a broad range of contributions, including academic essays, which are sent out for peer review; informal research articles that shed new light on any aspect of Thomas Hardy's life and work, or his enduring presence in Dorset life and landscape;

creative work; reports on events; personal reflections; parodies; and so on. I will also introduce gradual changes. For instance, working closely with the Hardy Society's Council of Management, I am hoping to give the journal a new look. The next journal (spring 2019) will feature a call for a new cover design, so look out for this (especially if you are blessed with artistic talent). Generally, I welcome readers' suggestions and input on any aspect of the journal. Please don't hesitate to contact me at the addresses (electronic and postal) provided at the back of the journal.

\*\*\*

This issue features some essays that originate in lectures or papers given at the 23<sup>rd</sup> International Thomas Hardy Conference and Festival, including Linda M. Shires and Francis O'Gorman's insightful and inspiring keynotes on Hardy's poetry. Further papers from the conference will appear, in revised and expanded form, in the spring issue; I hope that more speakers will submit their work in the coming weeks. There are more detailed reports and several images from the conference elsewhere in this issue. It's hardly necessary for me to add my own comments and praise. And yet ... Jane Thomas, our Academic Director, once again curated an extraordinary lecture programme, while the Call for Paper sessions, impeccably organised by Mary Rimmer, showcased exciting and insightful scholarship. Glimpses from the Conference feedback, offered in Mike Nixon's secretary report and Brenda Parry's report, bear testimony to the success of the opening weekend at Kingston Maurward and to the popularity of the walks, tours, and evening entertainments, with particular praise for Terence Stamp's appearance at the end of the week. For my taste, Terence Stamp had, perhaps, a bit too much of the Sergeant Troy about him ... but then, of course, I am a 'millennial' and, as they say, 'snowflake'. As ever, it was a treat to meet old friends and new in Dorchester, and I already look forward to 2020.

\*\*\*

The last few months have repeatedly, and sometimes painfully, brought home to me—and, no doubt, many other readers—the continuing resonance of Hardy's work. On a lighter note, the streaming service Netflix is currently airing a film called *Sierra Burgess is a Loser*. The premise: a teenage girl receives a text message from her crush. He had meant to text another, more popular (and presumably, according to the logic and standards of Hollywood production, more conventionally attractive) girl. The eponymous heroine seizes her chance, though, and draws the boy into a correspondence. He promptly falls in love with the image he

conjures up based on her words. This plot recalls Hardy's short story 'On the Western Circuit', since, like that older text, it explores the power of language to inspire emotion and sustain romantic and sexual attraction. Whether *Sierra Burgess is a Loser* succeeds, as 'On the Western Circuit' does, in combining this interest in the creative power of language with a trenchant exploration of the links between sexual attraction, romantic longing, economic inequality, and educational privilege is, of course, a different question.

It is *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, though, with which I have found myself grappling most frequently over the last months, because of, for instance, the case of Brock Turner, who sexually assaulted and raped an unconscious woman but was released after six months in jail; because of the #MeToo movement that rippled out from Hollywood into other sectors, including the academic world, highlighting the constant abuses of power that are still facilitated by hierarchical relationships; and because of the recent appointment of Brett Kavanaugh, who stands accused by Dr Christine Blasey Ford of sexual assault, to the US Supreme Court. Hardy's novel, though a product of its own moment, has lost none of its painful power, because, as these cases illustrate, socio-economic inequality still breeds sexual exploitation and protects abusers, and because we still need to confront what is central to the plot of *Tess*: that the absence of active protest or resistance does not signify consent (especially when a power disparity exists between the two people involved in a sexual encounter); that women's voices and experiences are silenced; and that when women break their silence, their accounts are often invalidated or ridiculed. If we are appalled by what *Tess Durbeyfield* suffers, we should not ignore the fact that, 128 years later, many of the structures that entrap this fictional character are still operational, albeit under different guises. Due to its sharp analysis of the operations of power, Hardy's work continues to provide us with a lens for thinking critically about our own moment, and this, no doubt, is one of the reasons for which it continues to generate exciting, challenging, and important scholarship.

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Finally, a few brief announcements.

First, a report of this year's Dorchester Vintage Bus and Coat Running Day, which took place in August, is included in this journal. For the past two years, the Thomas Hardy Society has collaborated with the West Country Historic Omnibus and Transport Trust (WHOTT). Another similar event will take place in 2019. The date is 11 August 2019.

Second, the third annual Thomas Hardy Study Day will take place on 13 April 2019. More information and a Call for Papers are included in this issue. The Study Day will focus on *Far from the Madding Crowd* and already boasts an impressive line-up of speakers. It promises to be an exciting and engaging event and it would be great to see many members of the society there (and to publish the best papers in the journal).

Finally, please continue submitting your items, academic and otherwise, to the *Hardy Society Journal* and the *Thomas Hardy Journal*. This might be rather long notice, but the next *Thomas Hardy Journal*, which will be published in the autumn of 2019, will take a slightly different format from usual. It aims to collect reflections, by readers from across the world, on why ‘Hardy matters’ in the second decade of the twenty-first century. A call for papers will be published shortly. The deadline for contributions will be 15 August 2019.

The deadline for submitting items to the spring 2019 issue of the *Hardy Society Journal* is 10 February. It is politely requested that, despite the 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, no readers send in mock valentines. I look forward to reading your submissions.



## SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM CASTERBRIDGE

### Rare Hardy letter

I was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to buy a Hardy letter recently, and one that has not been included in the Purdy and Millgate magnificent *Collected Letters* volumes. When I met the seller they gave me some interesting background as to how they got it: A great aunt had written to Hardy, and even though his reply began 'Dear Sir' (!), it had been stored carefully for many years in the dark, hence the ink is still a pristine colour.

To be helpful, below is my transcript of the letter:

10.12.1907

Dear Sir

I was quite unable to reply to your letter of Nov.19.

I suppose that the "Poems of the Past & the Present" contain more vital matter than my other books. But this does not answer your question which is my best book.

I must ask you not to print this letter, though you may of course use the information by putting it into your own words, if it has the slightest interest for anybody.

Yours truly

T Hardy

I have, of course, shared this with our Hardy letters expert, Keith Wilson, and any further information will be reported back via the Journals.

### Frank Pinion Award

Many members will have been familiar with this award over a number of years. It was a fund set up by the Pinion family in honour of a well-respected Hardy scholar, Frank Pinion. He wrote one of *the* books, 'A Hardy Companion', which first appeared in 1968, and others of his books include: 'A Thomas Hardy Dictionary' and 'One Rare Fair Woman'. The award is administered by his daughter, Catherine.

The award was set up by students at the school where he was Headmaster from the 1950s until 1961, when Frank went to work at Sheffield University. The award was originally funded by former school children at his school, forty years after he died! One pupil organised the



*Uncollected Letter from Thomas Hardy, dated 10 September 1907 – image courtesy of Mike Nixon.*

raising of the money, then wrote to Catherine to set something up in his memory. The rest is history.

Looking back I know, even in my time of seven Conferences, the award made an enormous difference as to whether someone, often from abroad, could afford to make the trip to one of our Conferences. I'm sure Frank would have been proud to have helped a young person further their interest in Hardy, and our thanks go to him, and, just as importantly, to Catherine and all her colleagues she consulted in the Sheffield branch of the Society. A sincere thank you from us, and all those past recipients.

### **Conference 2018: Questionnaire feedback**

This year's conference has been declared a resounding success! Forty-five people completed the feedback questionnaire and 91% considered the programme balance and 98% the organization 'excellent' or 'very good', the remaining assessments being 'good'. This is very gratifying,

as pulling it all together has been harder work this year and we picked up and rectified almost all the problems before they arose.

Many heartily approved the timetabling of 'call for papers' in the mornings (taking on board comments from the 2016 conference) as borne out by there being ten to thirteen delegates attending seven of the eight sessions – compared with 2016, where of the ten panels six were reviewed by one or two delegates with one reaching seven. There were many comments on the lines of 'so great to hear good papers from the next generation'.

We have some 'grade inflation' this year.... our '5' is now inadequate as our top rate of 'Excellent'. Several delegates have taken to giving the odd '5+' (13 awarded in all), QUESTION TIME got one of those plus a '10/5' and a 'heart', and a '5++' and an '11/5' for TERENCE STAMP! Other very highly rated entertainments were the WESSEX CONSORT CHOIR, the Leah's PORTRAIT OF TESS/Hardy's War, the film FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD, and of course TIM LAYCOCK & the MELLSTOCK BAND and the BARN DANCE (where the meal was much praised as well: 'Delicious' is not often attributed to corporate catering). On the subject of food, the light lunches at the Church attracted a lot of praise and thanks.

The sound system in the church was still heavily criticized. The demographics of our membership demands that we do more to solve this issue. Those with hearing aids on the LOOP found it made all the difference BUT several speakers were unwilling or unable to use the microphone which is an integral part of that system.

The five lectures all were very well reviewed for content. But whilst Profs Frances O'Gorman and Mark Ford came over very well, they probably benefitted from their male voices in the battle for audibility, as the female lecturers, mainly rated excellent, very good, and good, attracted most comments about inaudibility.

Kingston Maurward proved a popular venue, with uncertainty about transport being the only but significant issue: 'Shuttle service is a MUST'. The setting there for the New Hardy Players' Trumpet Major was idyllic but chilly, and many of our delegates would have liked chairs, or at least advice in the programme to bring their own. Those demographics again!

The Walks and Tours proved popular again, with highest praise for the St Juliot/Cornwall day trip, and the Casterbridge walk, followed by Fiddler of the Reels and Egdon Heath.

Most delegates thought the conference the right length though a significant cadre thought it could be shortened to save on accommodation and expenses as ‘not much happened the first weekend that couldn’t be put into the first day’. Accommodation costs are of concern. Apparently there used to be a ‘billeting system’ which we should try to reintroduce.

Many other suggestions and ideas to think about for next time have been offered and these will all be analysed and considered carefully by your Committee of Management over the coming months. Many thanks to all who came and made it such a memorable conference, and especially to those of you who took the trouble to leave feedback.

### Books for sale

The following books are offered for sale to members.

The following are all bound copies of magazines where various Hardy short stories first appeared. The bindings are not of the best, but the content is in excellent condition. I’m afraid, as they are weighty tomes, we will have to charge postage and packaging in addition to the price of the volume.

<i>The English Illustrated Magazine</i>	1883–1884 (Interlopers at the Knap)	£20
Ditto	1891–1892 (On the Western Circuit)	£20
Ditto	1893–1894 (Ancient Earthworks at Casterbridge)	£20
<i>Harpers Monthly Magazine</i>	Dec.1889–May 1890 (The First Countess of Wessex). (A poor spine)	£20

### Bargains – for a quick sale!

Leather Macmillan pocket edition:	<i>The Trumpet Major</i>	£10
Ditto:	<i>Life’s Little Ironies</i>	£10
Macmillan First Edition 1913:	<i>A Changed Man</i> . Poor spine, otherwise excellent	£30
Osgood edition 1896	<i>The Hand of Ethelberta</i> . Very good edition	£20
Two ‘Folio’ editions:	<i>Tess of the d’Urbervilles</i> . Excellent condition	£10
	<i>The Return of the Native</i> . In a slip case	£10

As usual, emails to the Hardy office please.

**Collected Letters of Hardy. Volumes 1–7.**

These are for sale through the Hardy office. Offers in excess of £300 please. All are VG+ copies.

**MIKE NIXON**



## NEW MEMBERS

### UK

Keith Brown	Northamptonshire
Susan Chorley	Liverpool
Sue Edney	Blagdon, Bristol
Sue Fulford	Blandford Forum
Prof Bernard and Dorothy Harrison	Lewes
Julian Herrington	Faversham, Kent
Dr Xianping Jiang	Cambridge
Ian Loats	Bristol
Allan MacPherson	Perth
Michelle Forest Marble	Somerton
Elizabeth O'Connell	Hampshire
*Alison and Howard Payton	Isle of Portland
John Kenneth Robertson	Bournemouth
Margaret Smith	Cardiff
Minna Vuohelainen	London
Peter Wild	Liskeard, Cornwall

### Overseas

Sarah Dangelantonio	USA
Emily Halliwell-MacDonald	Toronto, Canada
Linda Shires	New Jersey, USA

\*Denotes Joint Membership



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